Abdelbarr El Malki

Abdelbarrelmalki@gmail.com

Morocco, 2024.

The Throne Treatise.

By Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah.

Translation and commentary by Abdelbarr El Malki.

Copyright © 2024 by Abdelbarr El Malki

All rights reserved.

No portion of this book may be reproduced in any form without written permission from the publisher or author, except as permitted by copyright laws.

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
١٤٢٠

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1	Introduction	9
2	Biography of Ibn Taymiyyah	12
3	The Question sent to Shaykh al-Islam	21
4	First Aspect	22
5	The ninth sphere is not the Throne	26
6	The Throne is the Heaviest	35
7	The Throne is Above Paradise	39
8	Reason and Revelation	43
9	The Second Aspect	48
10	Affirming the Hand	50
11	Ibn al-Majishun Against the Jahmites	55
12	The Third Aspect	62
13	Critique of the Concept of Place	67
14	The Hadith of (Lowering)	75
15	Gravity and Law of Motion	78
16	Critique of Privation and Possession	88
17	The Creation is Not in God's Essence	110

Introduction

ALL praise is due to Allah, whom we praise and from Whom we ask help and forgiveness. We seek refuge in Allah from the evils of ourselves. He whom Allah guides has no one who can lead him astray, and he whom He leads astray has no one to guide him. I testify that there is nothing deserving of worship except Allah, and I testify that Muhammad is His servant and Messenger.

This treatise, though not extensive in length, is densely packed with profound knowledge. It stands out as one of my favorite small treatises by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah for several reasons. First, the eloquence of its style is remarkable, reflecting the astonishing breadth of the author's knowledge, particularly here in the field of astronomy with the predominant theories of his time. Despite his primary role as an Islamic jurist, Ibn Taymiyyah exhibited a profound understanding of astronomical theories and an awareness of areas of doubt and uncertainty, even hinting at places of criticism regarding certain prevalent ideas. This undoubtedly stems from an encyclopedic manner of reading, which is very evident throughout all of his works.

One of the most compelling reasons for my admiration is that this treatise provided a personal answer to a long-held question of mine. This, coupled with my general reverence for

Ibn Taymiyyah's works, motivated me to translate it, and comment on it. In my translation, I have aimed to use accessible and comprehensible language while retaining necessary technical terms to facilitate the material's understanding. I have observed that Ibn Taymiyyah himself was meticulous in explaining concepts clearly, often expanding on them from multiple perspectives to ensure his intentions were fully illustrated and any doubts were removed. Nonetheless, I have added my commentaries on the footnotes to further elaborate, define certain terms that may be ambiguous to the reader, summarize some of the points, and expand on relevant topics that we pass by in the treatise.

The treatise prominently focuses on the subject from an astronomical perspective, particularly in its first half as the question was related to that. True to his usual style, Ibn Taymiyyah approaches the topic from both rational and revelational angles, providing a comprehensive and detailed answer—as requested by the questioner—from three different aspects. His ability to integrate different fields of knowledge into a cohesive argument is a testament to his intellectual prowess, placing him undoubtedly in the elite circle of Islamic scholars throughout history.

I pray to Allah to reward him immensely and to continue making him a candle of light to the seekers of truth.

By Allah's servant: Abdelbarr Ibn Al-Hasan El Malki

July 21, 2024.

A brief biography of Ibn Taymiyyah

He is: Taqi ad-Din Abu al-Abbas Ahmad ibn Abd al-Halim ibn Abd al-Salam ibn Abdullah ibn Abi al-Qasim ibn Muhammad ibn Taymiyyah al-Harrani al-Hanbali al-Dimashqi (d. 728 AH)

Ibn Taymiyyah was born on Monday, the 10th, or according to some sources, the 12th of Rabi' al-Awwal in the year 661 AH in Harran. In 667 AH, the Tatars raided his hometown, forcing his family to flee to Damascus, where they settled. He pursued knowledge from the scholars of Damascus from a young age, excelling to the level of scholars in teaching and issuing fatwas before reaching the age of twenty. Ibn 'Abd al-Hadi, may Allah have mercy on him, mentioned about his youth that he: "studied the Musnad of Imam Ahmad ibn Hanbal multiple times, studied the six major books, as well as the Great Mu'jam of al-Tabarani. He focused on hadith, read and copied texts, learned calligraphy and arithmetic at the school, memorized the Quran, delved into fiqh, studied Arabic under Ibn 'Abd al-Qawi, then comprehended it, and began to ponder over Sibawayh's book until he understood grammar [Nahw]. He completely dedicated himself to Tafsir, surpassing in it, mastered the principles of jurisprudence and other fields. All of

this was while he was still in his teens, astonishing the people of Damascus with his sharp intelligence, mental agility, strong memory, and quick comprehension."

He was adept at derivation, strong in argument, and quick-witted. Al-Bazzar, may Allah have mercy on him, said about him: "As for what Allah bestowed upon him in terms of deriving meanings from prophetic words and narrations, demonstrating evidences on issues, explaining the explicit and implicit meanings of words, clarifying the specific from the general, the restricted from the absolute, the abrogating from the abrogated, explaining their regulations, implications, and consequences, so that when he mentioned an ayah or a hadith and explained its meanings and intent, the learned and discerning would be amazed by his derivation and astonished by what they heard or witnessed from him."

He was characterized by complete chastity, modesty in dress and food, piety, righteousness to his mother, devoutness, worship, and remembrance of Allah in every matter and condition. He always returned to Allah in all situations and issues, adhered strictly to Allah's limits, commands, and prohibitions, enjoining good and forbidding evil. His soul was insatiable for knowledge, never weary of reading, engaging, or researching. Ibn 'Abd al-Hadi, may Allah have mercy on him, said about him: "Our Sheikh, may Allah have mercy on him,

never ceased increasing in knowledge, continually engaging in learning and teaching, disseminating knowledge, and striving in the paths of goodness until he reached the leadership in knowledge and action, asceticism and piety, courage and generosity, humility and forbearance, reverence and awe, turning to God, enjoining good and forbidding evil, and all types of jihad with sincerity, chastity, integrity, good intention, and devotion to Allah. He was known for abundant supplication to Allah, great fear of Him, constant vigilance of Him, strict adherence to the Athar, calling to Allah, good morals, benefiting others, kindness to them, patience with those who harmed him, forgiving them, and praying for them, along with all types of goodness."

Ibn Taymiyyah was tried several times due to the malice and envy of his peers. Due to his high status in Sham among both the rulers and the populace, some weak-spirited individuals slandered him before the rulers in Egypt, finding no other criticism but his creed. He was summoned to Egypt in 705 AH after councils were held for him in Damascus, where the opponents had no argument against him. Upon arriving in Egypt, a trial was convened the next day, which Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah initially thought was a debate. Upon realizing that the opponent and judge were the same, he refused to answer. He remained in prison until Safar 707 AH, when a

delegation from Sham requested his release. He chose to stay in Egypt over returning with them to Damascus.

Later that year, the Sufis in Egypt demanded that his voice be silenced. Ibn Taymiyyah was given the choice between going to Damascus, Alexandria, or choosing imprisonment. He chose imprisonment, but his students and admirers insisted he accept going to Damascus, which he did out of respect for their wishes. When his convoy left Cairo for Damascus, a delegation from the Sultan stopped him, insisting that the state would only accept imprisonment. After a short period, he was released and resumed his teaching, with people eagerly seeking his knowledge.

In 709 AH, he was exiled from Cairo to Alexandria. This was beneficial for the people of Alexandria, who sought knowledge from him, were influenced by his sermons, and accepted his methodology. However, after seven months, al-Nasir Qalawun requested his return to Cairo, after he took control. He was among the supporters of Ibn Taymiyyah. Upon his return, he resumed his teaching in Cairo.

Ibn Taymiyyah was again tested due to his fatwa on the issue of divorce. He was asked to refrain from issuing this fatwa, but he did not comply, leading to his imprisonment in the citadel of Damascus by order of the deputy sultan from 720 AH to 721 AH for five months and a few days. His envious peers searched for something to slander him about before the rulers and

fabricated statements regarding his stance on visiting graves, claiming he prohibited visiting even the grave of our Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him. The deputy sultan in Damascus wrote to the sultan in Egypt about this, and without verifying the authenticity of the fatwa or consulting Ibn Taymiyyah, a judgment was issued against him in Sha'ban 726 AH, ordering his transfer to the citadel of Damascus and his detention there with some of his followers. His ordeal intensified in 728 AH when all his books, papers, and pens were taken from him, and he was barred from meeting people and from writing and authoring.

On the night of Monday, the 20th of Dhu al-Qi'dah in 728 AH, Shaykh Al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah passed away in the citadel of Damascus where he was imprisoned. People were allowed to enter the citadel, and he was washed there. The crowds gathered in the citadel and along the route to the Great Mosque of Damascus. He was prayed upon in the citadel, and his body was then brought to the mosque. Soldiers guarded it due to the immense crowd. After the noon prayer, the funeral prayer was performed, and his body was carried out amidst a great crowd, for people had closed their shops, and only a few people did not attend, or those who could not due to the huge crowd.

Ibn Taymiyyah's writings are numerous and hard to count. Despite their abundance, they were not confined to a single place

during his lifetime but were scattered across regions. As Al-Hafidh al-Bazzar, may Allah have mercy on him, stated: "As for his writings and compositions, they are too numerous for me to count or recall their names. Indeed, it is beyond the capability of most to do so, as they are very many, large and small, and spread across countries. Rarely did a country I visited not have some of his writings."

Ibn 'Abd al-Hadi, may Allah have mercy on him, mentioned that the responses of Ibn Taymiyyah are difficult to record and count due to their abundance and his fast writing speed, in addition to writing from memory without needing references, or specific place to write.

Among his notable works are: Al-Istiqaamah, Iqtidaa' As-Siraat Al-Mustaqeem, Bayaan Talbees Al-Jahmiyyah, Al-Jawaab As-Saheeh Liman Baddala Deen Al-Maseeh, Dar' Ta'arud Al-Aql Wal-Naql, As-Safadiyyah, Minhaaj As-Sunnah An-Nabawiyyah Fi Naqd Kalaam Ash-Shi'ah Al-Qadariyyah, and An-Nubuwwaat. He has many other books and letters, some published independently, some in large and small collections, and many still in manuscript form, whether extant or lost.

Al-Allama Kamal ad-Din ibn az-Zamlakani (d. 727 AH) said: "When he was asked about a particular field of knowledge, the listener would think that he knew nothing but that field, and would assume that no one knew it better than him. Scholars

from various schools of thought benefited from his knowledge in their own doctrines in ways they had not known before. It is not known that he ever debated someone and was defeated, nor did he discuss a science, whether religious or otherwise, without excelling in it over its practitioners and those ascribed to it. He had a remarkable ability in good classification, excellent expression, arrangement, division, and clarification." He also said: "All conditions of ijtihad were met in him."

Ibn Daqiq al-'Id, may Allah have mercy on him, said: "When I met Ibn Taymiyyah, I saw a man with all the sciences before his eyes, taking from them what he wanted and leaving what he wanted."

As for the praise of Imam Al-Dhahabi for his teacher, Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah, it is abundant. He said: "He studied rijal and ilal of hadith and became one of the leaders of criticism and the scholars of Athar, with piety, nobility, remembrance, and integrity. Then he turned to fiqh, its intricacies, principles, and arguments, consensus and disagreement, so that when he mentioned an issue of disagreement, he would cause amazement, then he would substantiate, evaluate, and do ijtihad, deserving of it, for the conditions of ijtihad were met in him. I have not seen anyone quicker in deriving verses relevant to the issue he discusses than him, nor anyone with a better memory of hadith texts and their

attribution to the authentic or Musnad or Sunan than him. It was as if the Quran and Sunnah were before his eyes and on his tongue, with eloquent expression, keen insight, and silencing of his opponents." He also said: "This, along with his unmatched generosity, extreme courage which would be used in parables, and detachment from what the soul desires of fine clothes, good food, and worldly comfort."

He said about him: "He could not have been criticized for misunderstanding, rather he possessed exceptional intelligence, nor for a lack of knowledge, for he was an overflowing sea, well-versed in the Book and the Sunnah, unparalleled in this regard. Nor was he a manipulator of religion; if he were, he would have been the quickest to flatter and agree with his opponents being hypocritical with them. Nor did he choose some matters based on whims... I do not expect any worldly gain, wealth, or status from what I have said about him, with my complete knowledge of him. However, it is not possible for me, in my religion or my mind, to conceal his virtues, bury his merits, yet highlight his forgiven shortcomings within the vastness of God's generosity."

He also said: "... he was a speaker of truth, a forbidding of evil, unafraid of the blame of any critic in the cause of God, possessing authority and courage, without accommodating

adversaries. And those who associated with him and knew him might accuse me of falling short in describing him..."[1]

[1] See for references "da'awa al-munawi'een li Sheikh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah" by Dr. Abdullah Al-Ghosn, published by Dar Ibn Al-Jawzi in Dammam, pp. 139-161.

The question sent to Shaykh al-Islam:

Shaykh al-Islam Abu al-Abbas Ahmad ibn Abd al-Halim ibn Abd al-Salam, the devout scholar and enlightened worshipper, Ibn Taymiyyah al-Harrani, may Allah support him, was asked:

"What do you say regarding the ('Arsh) Throne? Is it spherical or not? If it is spherical and Allah beyond it encompasses it from all directions, being distinct from it, what is the benefit of the servant turning towards Allah in supplication and worship, specifically facing upwards rather than any other direction? Considering there is no difference during time of supplication between aiming at elevation or any other [direction] from what surrounds the supplicant? Despite this, we find in our hearts an inclination towards the upward direction, without turning right or left. Inform us about this inherent necessity that we find within our hearts, which we have been naturally inclined towards. Provide us with a comprehensive satisfactory answer that clears the doubt and establishes the truth, if Allah wills. May Allah continue to benefit us through you and your knowledge, Amen."

He, May Allah be pleased with him responded:

Praise be to Allah, the Lord of the Worlds. The response to this question involves three aspects:

The first aspect:

One might argue: It is not proven by any reliable evidence that the Throne ('Arsh) is a sphere among the spherical celestial bodies[2], neither by religious evidence nor by rational evidence. Rather this was mentioned by a group of later scholars who studied astronomy and other branches of philosophy[3]. They

[2] The celestial spheres, or celestial orbs, were the fundamental entities of the cosmological models developed by Plato, Eudoxus, Aristotle, Ptolemy, Copernicus, and others. In these celestial models, the apparent motions of the fixed stars and planets are accounted for by treating them as embedded in rotating spheres made of an aetherial, transparent fifth element (quintessence), like gems set in orbs. Since it was believed that the fixed stars did not change their positions relative to one another, it was argued that they must be on the surface of a single starry sphere. [Grant, Planets, Stars, and Orbs, p. 440]

[3] What Shaykh al-Islam said here and hinted at later in the treatise about the uncertainty and doubt regarding the evidence of the

observed that there are nine celestial spheres[4], with the ninth, the "Atlantean," encompassing them, being spherical like them, and causing their eastern motion, although each sphere has its own specific motion apart from this general motion. When they heard from the prophets' traditions may Allah's peace and blessings be upon them, about Allah's Throne, His Kursi, and the seven heavens, they assumed that the Throne is the ninth sphere[5], believing that there is nothing beyond the ninth sphere, either absolutely, or there is nothing "created" beyond it.

Among them, some believed that the ninth sphere moves all the other spheres and considered it the origin of occurrences.

existence of the nine celestial spheres is now confirmed by modern science.

[4] In his work Almagest, Ptolemy introduced the concepts of epicycles and deferents to account for the complex observed paths of the planets. He mentioned the nine spheres, which include the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, the fixed stars, and the Primum Mobile (the first mover). Islamic philosophers [which Islam is free from] sought to harmonize this idea with Islamic teachings, equating the seven heavens mentioned in the Quran with the first seven spheres, and interpreting the remaining two as the Kursi and the Throne. As Ibn Taymiyyah notes, they perceived the Throne as the cause of occurrences.

[5] This is among other concepts that the "Islamic" philosophers tried to harmonize with Islamic texts following their Greek predecessors.

They claimed that Allah causes in it, what he decrees on earth, or He causes them in the soul which they believed to be connected to it, or in the intellect from which they believed this sphere emanates. Some of them even named it the spirit [Rouh], others considered the "Nafs" to be the spirit, and others considered the "Nafs" to be the Preserved Tablet, and the intellect to be the Pen.

Sometimes they regard the spirit as the tenth active intellect belonging to the lunar celestial sphere and the Nafs attached to it. They may even consider the relation of that to God Almighty, as the relation of the brain to the human being; in which he determines what he does before it happens, along with various other assertions which we have explained and exposed their falsehood elsewhere.

Some of them would claim they knew this through unveiling [Kashf][6] and witnessing, while they are lying, having taken this from the philosophers, either by imitating them, or by adhering to their corrupt method, just as the authors of the "Epistles of the Brethren of Purity" and their likes have done[7]

[6] Unveiling is a concept that relates to a sadden knowledge that occurs in the person's heart similar to a natural revelation without intellectual argumentation.

[7] Meaning, they have either borrowed such concepts directly from the philosophers or reached the same conclusion by adhering to

They might imagine within themselves what they have taken from others, and assume it to be unveiling [Kashf], just as a Christian imagines the Trinity[8] he believes in, and might see it in his dream, thinking it is an unveiling, but it is merely an illusion of what he believed. Many adherents of false beliefs, when they indulge in austerity[9], it shapes their souls; thus, they

similar principles. Nonetheless, these concepts are inherited from the philosophers and their methods.

[8] The Trinity is the Christian belief that the being of God is three distinct persons, co-equal and co-eternal with each other. Ibn Taymiyyah perhaps refers here to the fact Christians acknowledge the inherent contradiction in this belief. To address this, they resort to the concept of mystery or unveiling, claiming it is something to be perceived spiritually rather than rationally. This is a common response among Christians when faced with the inherent paradox that breaks their theology.

[9] This refers to the practice of strict self-discipline and abstention from all forms of indulgence, known in Arabic as *riyadah*. Practitioners of this approach believe that by engaging in such practices, they attain a higher spiritual state and acquire certain knowledge that is not accessible to others. This concept is related to unveiling because, at a certain point in this process, unveiling is expected to occur. However, by imposing such punishment on the body, their psyche becomes disturbed that hallucinations can occur and the devil finds his opportunity to inspire His blasphemies, which are perceived as natural revelation. This phenomenon is notably observed among Hindus, Buddhists, followers of

visualize their beliefs, thinking they are unveilings, and we have elaborated on this extensively elsewhere.

The point here is that regarding their claim that the Throne is the ninth sphere; it could be said they have no evidence for it, neither a rational nor a religious one[10].

For the rational evidence: the foremost philosophers explicitly state that they have no proof that there is nothing else beyond the ninth sphere, nor that the spheres are only nine, rather it is possible that they are more than that. however different movements and eclipses suggested to them what they mentioned, as for what they had no evidence for its existence, they neither know its existence or lack thereof.

For instance, they deduced that one planet is beneath another by observing that the lower one eclipses the upper one without the reverse occurring. They inferred from this that it

---

Eastern philosophies in general and Sufis. Notice that this is different from the unveiling which God bestows upon his servants from understanding and wisdom which in any case does not contradict his divine revelation.

10 The Ninth Sphere is Not the Throne: they have no evidence to restrict the cosmos to the model they had, for the throne to be the 9th sphere. It could be that the cosmos is far beyond their perception, and the throne would still be above that.

exists in a sphere above it, just as they inferred from different movements that the spheres differ, even positing multiple spheres within a single celestial sphere, like the epicycle[11] and others. However, regarding what exists above this, while having no evidence to support its existence; they do not know its non-existence or existence through their methodology. Similarly, the claim that the ninth sphere's movement is the origin of occurrences is erroneous and misleading based on their principles, because they assert that the eighth sphere has its own movement due to its constants, and that motion has two celestial poles other than the two poles of the ninth sphere, and so does the seventh, and the sixth. If each sphere has its distinct movement, and these different movements are the cause of the different accuring celestial configurations, and these configurations in turn cause [the below] terrestrial events, then movement of the ninth sphere is just part of the cause, like the movement of other spheres. The configurations formed in the sphere are due to the conjunction of planets in one degree, their opposition when they are 180 degrees apart, trine aspect when

[11] In the Ptolemaic system, an epicycle is a geometric model used to explain the apparent complex motion of planets. It describes a small circle (epicycle) whose center moves along the circumference of a larger circle (deferent). This model used to account for the retrograde motion of planets as seen from Earth.

they are 120 degrees apart, square aspect when they are 90 degrees apart, sextile aspect when they are 60 degrees apart, and so on. These configurations are created by different movements, and each movement is distinct from the other one; The movement specific to the eighth sphere is not the same as that of the ninth, even if the eighth was following the overall movement of the ninth, like a person moving in a boat in the opposite direction of the boat's movement.

Similarly, the movement specific to the seventh sphere is not derived from the ninth or the eighth, and the same applies to the other spheres. Each sphere's unique movement is not derived from the spheres above it. Therefore, how can it be asserted that the origin of all occurrences is merely the movement of the ninth sphere! as claimed by those who thought the Throne is dense, while the ninth sphere according to them is simple and homogeneous without any variation at all?[12] So, how can it be the cause of various matters, not considering receptacles[13] and

[12] He is highlighting the discrepancy in the claim that the throne is the 9th celestial sphere yet they affirm the throne to be dense, while the 9th sphere to them is not.

[13] A receptacle means a container. In this context, it refers to how the medium influences a certain matter or object, giving it distinctive properties compared to other parts of the same matter or object that do not have those properties.

other causes? But they are indeed misguided people. They claim the ninth sphere is 360 degrees, attributing a different effect to each degree, not due to different receptacles! like someone coming to one [kind of] water and assigning different effects to each part without considering the receptacles, making one part heating, another cooling, another joyful, and another sorrowful. This is clearly falsehood and misguidance, as they themselves and any rational person know.

Given that these people have no evidence to deny the existence of something else beyond the nine spheres, then asserting that what the prophets reported as the Throne being the ninth sphere is a shot in the dark, a statement made without knowledge.

All of this is while assuming the existence of the nine spheres as commonly accepted by astronomers, since there is much debate and uncertainty in that regard, as well as for their evidence, which is not the subject here![14] nonetheless we are

[14] Shaykh Al-Islam acknowledges the inherent uncertainties and doubts regarding the astronomical theories of his time, and as previously highlighted, his remarks were accurate. However, for the sake of argument, he will address the question based on the common astronomical theories of his era to demonstrate that, regardless of the claims, there is no contradiction in affirming what God has taught through His revelation.

speaking based on this assumption. Also, the spheres in their forms and their encompassing each other are of the same kind; the relation of the seventh to the sixth is like that of the sixth to the fifth. If there is a ninth sphere, its relation to the eighth is like that of the eighth to the seventh.

However, the Throne, according to the reports, is distinct from other creations. Its relation to them is not like the relation of some of those creations to each other. Allah Almighty says: "Those who bear the Throne and those around it glorify their Lord with praise and believe in Him"[15], and He, the exalted says: "And eight will, that Day, bear the Throne of your Lord above them"[16], indicating that the Throne has bearers today and on the Day of Judgment, and those who bear it and those around it glorify [God] and seek forgiveness for the believers.

It is known that the establishment of one celestial sphere by the power of Allah Almighty is like the establishment of all the other spheres, with no difference between one sphere and another. If it is determined that some have angels carrying them, their ruling is like that of their counterpart. Allah says: "And you will see the angels surrounding the Throne, exalting with praise of their Lord"[17]. Here, it is mentioned that angels

[15] Ghafir 40:7
[16] Al-Haqqah 69:17
[17] Az-Zumar 39:75

surround the Throne, and in another place, it is mentioned that it has bearers, while combining in another place between its bearers and those around it, he says: "Those who bear the Throne and those around it glorify with praise of their Lord."[18]

Moreover, Allah informed that His Throne was upon the water before He created the heavens and the earth, as He Almighty said: "And it is He who created the heavens and the earth in six days, and His Throne had been upon water"[19].

It is also established in Sahih al-Bukhari and other sources, from 'Imran ibn Husayn, that the Prophet, peace be upon him said: "Allah existed without anything other than him, and His Throne was upon the water, and He wrote in the Book all things, then He created the heavens and the earth." In another narration: "Allah existed without anything before Him, and His Throne was upon the water, then He created the heavens and the earth, and wrote in the Book all things." In another authentic narration: "Allah existed without anything with Him, and His Throne was upon the water, then He wrote in the Book all things." It was established in Sahih Muslim, from Abdullah ibn 'Amr, that the Prophet, peace be upon him said: "Allah decreed the measures of creation fifty thousand years before He created the heavens and the earth, and His Throne was upon the

[18] Ghafir 40:7
[19] Hud 11:7

water." This decree occurred after the existence of the Throne and before the creation of the heavens and the earth by fifty thousand years.

He, glorified and exalted, is praised as being the Possessor of the Throne, as He said: "Say, 'If there were gods with Him, as they say, then they would have sought a way to the Possessor of the Throne'"[20], and "He is the Exalted in all degrees, the Possessor of the Throne, He sends the spirit by His command upon whom He wills of His servants to warn of the Day of Meeting, the Day they come forth, nothing about them will be concealed from Allah. To whom belongs all sovereignty this Day? To Allah, the One, the Prevailing"[21], and he Almighty said: "And He is the Forgiving, the Loving, the Possessor of the Glorious Throne, Doer of what He intends"[22].

The term "Glorious" has been read both as an attribute of Allah [with raf'] and as an attribute of the Throne [with khafd]. And He Almighty said: "Say, 'Who is the Lord of the seven heavens and the Lord of the Great Throne?' They will say, 'They belong to Allah.' Say, 'Then will you not fear Him?'" [23], describing the Throne as Great and Glorious, and also as Noble

[20] Al-Isra 17:42
[21] Ghafir 40:15-16
[22] Al-Buruj 85:14-16
[23] Al-Mu'minun 23:86-87

when he said: "So exalted is Allah, the Sovereign, the Truth; there is no deity except Him, Lord of the Noble Throne"[24].

Likewise, in the Sahihain from Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them, that the Prophet, peace be upon him used to say during distress: "There is no deity but Allah, the Great, the Forbearing; there is no deity but Allah, the Lord of the Great Throne; there is no deity but Allah, the Lord of the heavens and the earth; the Lord of the Noble Throne," describing the Throne as both Great and Noble in this Hadith.

Therefore, the opponent's claim is that: the relationship of the highest sphere to what is beneath it is like that of any other [sphere] to what is beneath it. [However,] If the Throne were of the same genus as the celestial spheres, then its relationship to what is beneath it would be like that of any other [sphere] to what is beneath it! and this does not necessitate its exclusion from that genus nor specifying its [unique] mention, just as it does not necessitate the specific mention of one heaven over another, even though the upper heaven is to the lower one as a celestial sphere is to another according to their view! Regarding its size that distinguishes it from what is underneath, it is similar to how the upper heaven is distinguished from the lower heaven. In fact, [even] the relationship of the heaven to the air and air to

[24] Al-Mu'minun 23:116

water and earth, is similar to the relationship of one celestial sphere to another. Despite this, it did not make any of these categories distinctively favored above what is underneath it, or described with nobility, glory and greatness[25], and it is known that the Throne is not a cause for their existence or their movements; each has its own movement specific to it. Therefore, it cannot be said that its movement is the cause of occurrences. In fact, if the movements of the celestial spheres are causes of occurrences, then the movements specific to entities—other than the Throne— are more numerous. It Is also not necessary that because it encompasses them, it has to be greater than the sum of them together, unless it had a corresponding thickness, otherwise it is known that when dense entities are close to each other, the sum of the interior volume is greater than the encompassing body, potentially by several multiples. What is more is that the various movements that are not derived from

[25] He is arguing that if the throne were merely the 9th celestial sphere and its only distinction from what is beneath it were its size, then that would not be sufficient to justify its unique mention in the Qur'an. Other creations have similar relationships with what is beneath them but are not necessarily described with the same glory, nobility, and greatness. This suggests that the throne is of a different genus than those celestial spheres.

the Throne's motion; are more numerous, yet its motion encompasses them all.

It has been established in Sahih Muslim from Juwayriya bint al-Harith that the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him entered upon her while she was glorifying God with pebbles from dawn until midday. He said, "I have said after you four words that, if weighed against all you have said, would outweigh them: 'Subhan Allahi 'adad khalqihi, (Glory to Allah according to the number of His creation) Subhan Allah zinata 'arshihi, (Glory to Allah according to the weight of His Throne,) Subhan Allah rida nafsihi, (Glory to Allah according to what pleases Him) Subhan Allah midada kalimatihi' (Glory to Allah equal to the ink that may be used in recording his words.)" This indicates that the weight of the Throne is the heaviest of weights, while they [the astronomers] assert that the ninth sphere is neither light nor heavy! It even indicates that the Throne alone has the greatest conceivable weight to be used as an example, just as the number of creations is the greatest conceivable number to be used as an example[26].

26 After demonstrating that their assertion of the throne being above the celestial spheres does not necessarily imply it is greater in size—since what is beneath it may have a greater volume—he also showed that the reality of the throne contradicts their belief about the 9th

In Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri narrated that a man from the Jews came to the Prophet, peace be upon him after his face had been slapped and said, "O Muhammad, one of your companions slapped my face." The Prophet, peace be upon him said: "Call him." When he was summoned, the Prophet, peace be upon him, asked, "Why did you slap his face?" He replied, "O Messenger of Allah, I passed by him in the market and heard him say, 'By Him who chose Moses over humanity!' I said, 'O wicked one, over Muhammad?' Anger seized me and I slapped him." The Prophet, peace be upon him then said, "Do not prefer one prophet over another, for people will faint on the Day of Resurrection, and I will be the first to regain consciousness. I will see Moses holding one of the pillars of the Throne. I do not know whether he regained consciousness before me or if he was compensated for his fainting on Mount Sinai." This indicates that the Throne has pillars. The term pillar was mentioned with a different expression "leg" and the statements in this regard are similar.

sphere. The 9th sphere to them is considered neither heavy nor light, while the Throne is described as the heaviest.

Also in the two authentic collections[27], it is narrated by Jabir that the Prophet, peace be upon him said, "The Throne of the Most Merciful shook upon the death of Sa'd ibn Mu'adh." A man said to Jabir that al-Bara' claimed it was the bier that shook, Jabir replied, "There were some issues between these two tribes, I indeed heard the prophet peace be upon him saying: "the Throne of the Most Merciful shook for the death of Sa'd ibn Mu'adh." This was also narrated by Muslim in his Sahih from Anas, who stated that the Prophet, peace be upon him said while Sa'd's funeral was being prepared, "The Throne of the Most Merciful shook for it."

The philosophers also claim that the movement of the ninth sphere is constant and uniform. Those who interpret this to mean the joy and delight of the Throne's bearers must provide evidence for their assertion, as mentioned by Abu al-Hasan al-Tabari and others, and the context and wording of the hadith negate this possibility.

In Sahih al-Bukhari, Abu Huraira narrated that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him said, "Whoever believes in Allah and His Messenger, performs the prayer, pays the zakat, and fasts Ramadan, it is incumbent upon Allah to admit him to Paradise, whether he emigrated for the sake of Allah or

[27] Sahih Al-Imam Al-bukhari, and Sahih Al-Imam Muslim.

remained in the land where he was born." They asked, "O Messenger of Allah, should we not give glad tidings of this to people?" He said, "In Paradise, there are a hundred degrees that Allah has prepared for those who strive in His cause. The distance between each two degrees is like the distance between the heaven and the earth. So when you ask Allah, ask for Paradise, for it is the central and the highest part of the garden (Jannah). Above it is the Throne of the Most Merciful, and from it flow the rivers of Jannah." In Sahih Muslim, Abu Sa'id al-Khudri narrated that the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him said, "O Abu Sa'id, whoever is content with Allah as his Lord, Islam as his religion, and Muhammad as his Prophet, Jannah is assured for him." Abu Sa'id was astonished and asked, "Repeat it for me, O Messenger of Allah." The Prophet, peace be upon him repeated it and added, "And there is another virtue by which Allah elevates the servant a hundred degrees, between each of which is the distance between the heavens and the earth." Abu Sa'id asked, "What is it, O Messenger of Allah?" He replied, "Striving in the cause of Allah."

In Sahih al-Bukhari, it is narrated that Umm Al-Rabi' bint al-Bara', the mother of Haritha ibn Suraqa, came to the Prophet, peace be upon him and said, "O Prophet of Allah, will you not tell me about Haritha? He was killed in the battle of Badr by a stray arrow. If he is in Jannah, I will be patient; if not, I will

weep greatly for him." The Prophet, peace be upon him, replied, "O mother of Haritha, there are multiple gardens in Jannah, and your son has attained Paradise; the highest."

This clarifies that in the first Hadith: The Throne is above Paradise, which is the highest and central part of Jannah, and that Jannah consists of a hundred levels, the distance between each two levels being like that between the heavens and the earth. The second Hadith confirms the description of the hundred levels, and the third Hadith corroborates that Paradise is the highest part of Jannah.

Given that the Throne is above Paradise, one may argue that if it was the case, it follows that the height and elevation described here exceed what is known from astronomy. It is not known by astronomical calculation that the distance between the ninth sphere and the first sphere is a hundred times that between the heaven and the earth[28]. According to their view, the ninth sphere is contiguous[29] with the eighth sphere. Thus, it has been clarified that the Throne is above Paradise, which is the highest and central part of Jannah.

[28] Another critique by Shaykh al-Islam, to refute the idea that the cosmos is restricted to the nine spheres.

[29] contiguous: sharing a common border; touching.

In the well-known hadith narrated by Abu Dharr, he said, "I asked, 'O Messenger of Allah, which verse revealed to you is the greatest?' He said, "Ayat al-Kursi." Then he said, "O Abu Dharr, the seven heavens compared to the Kursi are like a ring thrown in a vast desert, and the superiority of the Throne over the Kursi is like the superiority of that desert over the ring.'" This hadith has various chains of transmission and has been recorded by Abu Hatim ibn Hibban in his Sahih, Ahmad in his Musnad, and others.

Some have deduced from the hadith in Sunan Abi Dawud and elsewhere, narrated by Jubayr ibn Mut'im, that the Throne is domed. An Arab came to the Prophet, peace be upon him and said, "O Messenger of Allah, lives are perishing, families are hungry, and wealth is destroyed. Pray to Allah for us, for we seek your intercession with Allah and seek Allah's intercession with you." The Prophet, peace be upon him glorified Allah so much that it was apparent in the faces of his Companions. He then said, "Woe to you! Do you know what you are saying? Allah is not to be interceded with among anyone of His creation. His status is greater than that. Verily, Allah is on His Throne, and His Throne is above His heavens like this," and he indicated with his fingers forming a dome shape. In another expression, "Verily, His Throne is above His heavens, and His heavens are above His earth like this," forming a dome shape with his fingers.

This hadith, although indicating a dome shape, along with the prophet's statements about Paradise being the highest and central part of Jannah, with its roof being the Throne of the Most Merciful, and that it is located above it, and the center cannot be the highest [point] unless in a round shape; Still, it does not necessarily imply that the Throne is one of the celestial spheres. Rather, that [above description is possible if it is [Just] conceived as being above all celestial spheres[30], regardless of whether someone claimed that it encompasses the spheres, or that it is above them without encompassing them; just as the surface of the Earth is above the upper half of the Earth without encompassing it[31].

[30] He is arguing that even if the evidences suggest a domed or spherical shape to the throne, it still would not make it the 9th sphere as the philosophers claim. Instead, it would place it above the cosmos entirely, without indicating that it is one of the celestial spheres, or the number of spheres beneath it.

[31] Shaykh Al-Islam believed that the Earth is spherical, as it is apparent and will be made clearer later in the letter. However, during his time, they were not aware of the existence of the Americas and Australia. As a result, they perceived that the inhabited surface of the Earth was located primarily on the northern hemisphere or upper half of the sphere, while the other side was thought to be filled with the ocean.

Iyas ibn Muawiyah said: "The heaven over the earth is like a dome," and it is known that a celestial sphere is similarly spherical. However, the term "dome" implies curvature from above but does not necessarily imply curvature from all sides except with [an additional] separate evidence.

The term "celestial sphere" inherently implies complete curvature, as he Almighty said: "And it is He who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon; all [heavenly bodies] swim along, each in its rounded course"[32], and his saying: "It is not allowable for the sun to reach the moon, nor does the night overtake the day, but each, in an orbit, is swimming"[33]. This indicates that they are in a completely spherical

orbit, as Ibn Abbas, may Allah be pleased with them, said: "In an orbit like the spindle whorl."[34]

As for the term "dome," it does not address this meaning, neither negating nor affirming it, but it does indicate curvature from above, like a dome placed on the ground.

Some of them have claimed that the celestial spheres are distinct from the heavens, but others have refuted this view,

[32] Al-Anbiya: 33

[33] Ya-Sin: 40

[34] A spindle whorl is a perforated disk used in the production of spun fiber.

citing Allah's statement: "Do you not see how Allah has created seven heavens in layers and made the moon therein a [reflected] light and made the sun a burning lamp?"[35]. Thus, He informed that He placed the moon within them, and He has already stated that it is in an orbit[36]. However, this is not the place to elaborate extensively on this topic and to clarify its reality, demonstrating that what is known through correct mathematical calculation does not contradict what has been conveyed through divine revelation, and that sound revealed knowledge does not contradict sound rational knowledge, as it has been expounded upon along with similar matters in other places[37]. This is

[35] **Nuh: 15-16**

[36] Some argued that the celestial spheres are not related to the [known] heavens or located within them, but this does not align with the fact that God described some of the celestial spheres as being within the heavens, like the moon for instance.

[37] This golden rule of Shaykh Al-Islam is always present in his books, and it is rare for him not to highlight the fact that God's revelation does not contradict sound reason. This is because the Creator of correct reason, who ingrained it in human beings and elevated them above other creatures through it, cannot possibly contradict it with what He has sent down in the form of revelation. Shaykh Al-Islam insisted on this reality because the philosophers and Kalamists believed that what revelation seems to teach contradicts reason. However, what they mean by reason, as Shaykh Al-Islam argued, is not the intrinsic, innate rational capability

[certainly] needed in such discussions and similar ones that have perplexed many people, as they perceive what is claimed to be rationally known to contradict what is claimed to be known through revelation. This has led to each group rejecting what they did not fully understand, to the extent the situation resulted in some Kalamists [38] arguing against philosophers on [the

of human beings. They have a specific category of reason that is, in and of itself, irrational and contradictory. Based on this perception of reason, they measure God's revelation, and if they find a clash, they conclude that revelation contradicts reason, when it would have been more appropriate to double check what they thought was reason, which is a set of premises and methodologies invented by some fallible men. Reason in its correct pure form does not and cannot contradict sound revelation. This is not to give reason absolute power, for it is, in and of itself, deficient and limited. However, it is a measuring tool with the capacity to evaluate reality. As for things beyond its capacity, it cannot initially affirm or deny them. Upon receiving information, if something is rational, the intellect would not oppose it, contrary to what is irrational. That is why it is said that God may reveal what astonishes and surprises the intellect but not what inherently contradicts it. Ibn Taymiyyah demonstrated this in numerous places, especially in his great project *Dar' Ta'arud al-Aql wa Naql*.

[38] Kalam theologians, or practitioners of Kalam who argue for religious beliefs through what they assume to be reason. they have erred due to their deviation from revelation and their blind adherence to flawed

celestial spheres] with what constitutes no valid evidence for them, neither from Shariah nor from reason, mistakenly believing that such arguments support the Shariah, even though what they denied is also established by Shariah evidences[39].

The philosophers and their followers, on the other hand, base their arguments on sensory observations without knowing what lies beyond that. For instance, they can know that rising vapor condenses into clouds, and that when clouds collide, a sound is produced, and similar phenomena. However, their understanding of these processes is like their knowledge that semen winds up within the womb. Yet, what necessitates that the

---

theories and perceptions. Thus, they ended up in conflict with both reason and revelation, similar to their philosophical predecessors. This is why the Salaf prohibited indulging in such futile endeavors, which lead to no benefit and only weaken the person's reverence of God and his religion.

[39] This highlights that some of them would attempt to refute certain positions of the philosophers. However, due to their flawed foundations, they would either fall short or end up denying something established by Shariah. Not always but in many cases where they submit to some problematic premises of their opponents that influence their final judgment. This is not only between the Philosophers and the Kalamists, but true as well for the Kalami sects themselve, like the Ash'aris with the Mu'tazila.

homogeneous semen is from which all of these various organs and functions are created, in such a precise, excellent order, which displays profound wisdom and mercy, the likes of which amazed the intellects?

Similarly, what necessitates that this air or vapor should condense into clouds in a specific measure, at a specific time, and in a designated place? And what causes it to descend upon people when they need it, providing just enough to sustain them without excess that harms them, or deficiency that keeps them in need? What drives it to the barren land that either receives insufficient rainfall or nothing at all, like the land of Egypt where little rain used to not suffice, and much of it used to destroy its buildings? Allah says: "Do they not see that We drive the water to barren land and bring forth thereby crops of which their livestock and they themselves eat? Then do they not see?"[40].

Similarly, the moving clouds, and it is known that every movement is either coerced, following the force applied, or natural. It happens when the natural object moves away from its center and seeks to return to it, or it is voluntary, which is the origin of all movements, as all movements are dependent on voluntary movements initiated by Allah's angels, who are "Those who govern the affair"[41], and "Those who distribute

[40] As-Sajda: 27
[41] An-Nazi'at: 5

[provisions] by [Allah's] command" [42] **, and other such descriptions Allah has mentioned about the angels. There is in rational knowledge what corroborates this, but the discussion on this and similar topics has its own different place**[43]**.**

[42] Adh-Dhariyat: 4

[43] These are important remarks highlighting the transcendental aspect of what we empirically observe. Beyond the physical natural reality lies the precise, excellent, meticulous, and miraculous design and wisdom of God, who created everything with order and appointed a cause for everything. He governs His universe as He wishes in such a profound and excellent manner that each of these phenomena becomes a sign of His existence and wisdom. This is something often neglected by naturalists and empiricists, who assume that understanding how something functions and works automatically excludes God's power and design of that particular thing. This criticism may apply to some pagan religions, but it does not hold for Muslims whose lord commands them to see his signs within themselves and around them, Muslims believe that God acts within His world, and creates with a precise measure. In fact, the laws of the universe He established serve as evidence of the lawmaker and designer, for no rational person, upon recognizing the complexity and magnificence of a creature, would exclude its Creator. On the contrary, such recognition should be a greater driving force to believe in and praise Him. Thus Atheists are the least intelligent for holding such a position, which may explain the absurd lifestyle they generally have following that worldview. "*Man is but what he thinks*"

The point here is to demonstrate that what is mentioned in the question is negated in every respect, thus, the discussion in the response is based on scientific, not imitational, nor postulated arguments. Once we clarify that the response is valid in every respect, as we shall do, it does not matter if [only] one of the perspectives is the actual reality, although we know that to be the case. However, refining the answer for [only] one perspective and substantiating it without considering others, involves an [extensive] elaboration that is not needed here; for if the response is valid in every respect, it is more effective and concise[44].

The second aspect:

It should be said: whether the Throne is the ninth celestial sphere, or a body encompassing the ninth celestial sphere, or above it from the perspective of the earth's surface without encompassing it, or [another view from] what was said about it;

[44] Meaning that his aim is to address doubts and answer the question irrespective of the person's considerations, as it is more beneficial. For his response is intended to work with both models that shall be discussed, although he knows only one will align with reality.

it must be known that both the upper and lower worlds, in relation to the Creator Almighty, are exceedingly minuscule, as Allah said: "They have not appraised Allah with true appraisal, while the earth entirely will be within His grip on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens will be folded in His right hand. Exalted is He above what they associate with Him"[45].

In the two authentic collections, Abu Hurayrah reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Allah, Blessed and Exalted is He, will grasp the earth on the Day of Resurrection and fold the heavens in His right hand, then He will say: 'I am the King. Where are the kings of the earth?'"

In the two authentic collections—with the expression of Muslim—Abdullah ibn Umar reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Allah, Blessed and Exalted is He, will grasp the earth on the Day of Resurrection and fold the heavens in His right hand, then He will say: 'I am the King. Where are the kings of the earth?'"

In yet another narration in the two authentic collections—with the expression of Muslim—Abdullah ibn Umar reported that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Allah will fold the heavens on the Day of Resurrection, then He will take them with His right hand and say: 'I am the King. Where are the tyrants? Where are the arrogant?' Then He will fold the earths with His

[45] Az-Zumar: 67

left hand and say: 'I am the King. Where are the tyrants? Where are the arrogant?'"

In another authentic narration, Abdullah ibn Maqsim looked at Abdullah ibn Umar as he was describing how the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "Allah will take His heavens and earth with His hand and say: 'I am the King,' —and He clasps and unclasps His fingers—: 'I am the King!'" to the extent I saw the pulpit move from the bottom until I wondered: it is going to fall with the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him.? "In yet another narration, he said: "I saw the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, on the pulpit saying: 'The Almighty will take His heavens and earth'—and He [the prophet] clasped His hand and began to clasp and unclasp it[46]—and he [Allah]

[46] Affirming the hand:

In all of these narrations, the narrator describes how the Prophet (peace be upon him) was and what he was doing with his hand while describing Allah Almighty holding the entire creation in His hand on the Day of Resurrection. He would clasp and unclasp his hand, indicating that Allah Almighty would also fold the creation in His hand.

The position of Ahl as-Sunnah is that we accept what the Prophet said and do not deny it. We believe that God will certainly fold the creation and place them in His hand. As for knowing how His hand is, that is from the knowledge we were not given. We know He exists

will say: 'I am the Most Merciful, I am the King, I am the most holy, I am the all perfect, I am the source of Serenity, I am the watcher of all, I am the Almighty, I am the supreme in might, I am the majestic, I am the One who initiated creation after it was nothing, I am the One who restored it. Where are the arrogant?

---

and exists with attributes, and one of His attributes is that He is described with hands. Just as His essence is unique and incomparable, so are His attributes. There is nothing like them. Whoever affirms that God exists in a unique way, different from creation, yet rejects His attributes with the excuse of resembling creation has certainly contradicted himself. For the same reason that makes him accept that God has existence, life, power, and ability without resembling creation—since creatures also have existence, life, power, and ability—he should be consistent and affirm the rest of what God attributed to Himself. God is more aware of Himself and His attributes, and He does not attribute to Himself anything deficient. Rather, everything He described Himself with is necessarily an attribute of perfection and does not resemble creation. Whoever thinks otherwise should cure his heart from the disease of anthropomorphism, which certainly detracts from the reverence of God, submission to Him, and acceptance of His word. This belief leads to imagining God with attributes of creatures, and if this were the only negative side effect of such belief, it would be sufficient to ruin a person's religion and relationship with the Creator.

Where are the tyrants?' —In another expression—: Where are the tyrants? Where are the arrogant?" And he, peace be upon him was tilting to his right and to his left, to the extent I saw the pulpit move from the bottom, until I wondered: it is going to fall with the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him.?"

The hadith is narrated in the authentic collections, in the Musnads and other sources with various wordings that corroborate each other. In some versions, it is mentioned that he recited on the pulpit: "The entire earth will be within His grip on the Day of Resurrection"[47]. He said: "It will be folded in His hand, and He will throw it like when a boy throws a ball." In another narration: "The Almighty will take His heavens and earth in His hand, and make them in His palm, then do with them like this—as kids do with a ball—saying: 'I am Allah, the One!'"

Ibn Abbas said: "Allah will grasp them such that their extremities will not be visible in His hand." In another narration, he said: "The seven heavens and the seven earths and what is in them and between them, in the hand of the Most Merciful, are [nothing] but like a mustard seed in the hand of one of you." These reports are well-known in the hadith books[48].

[47] Az-Zumar: 67

[48] These narrations and other similar ones all indicate the insignificance of the entire creation to God Almighty, all praise be to

In Sahih al-Bukhari and Sahih Muslim, Abdullah ibn Masud reported that a man from the Jews came to the Prophet, peace be upon him, and said: "O Muhammad, Allah will place the heavens on one finger, the earths on one finger, the mountains on one finger, the water and soil on one finger, and all other creatures on one finger, then He will shake them and say: 'I am the King, I am the King.'" The Prophet, peace be upon him, smiled until his molar teeth were visible, confirming the rabbi's words, then recited: "They have not appraised Allah with true appraisal while the earth entirely will be within His grip on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens will be folded in His right hand"[49].

---

him, to the extent they are like a small ball or a seed or anything that people do not think much of in relation to them, and to Allah belongs the highest similitude.

[49] Az-Zumar: 67

From the humor I find in the Kalamists' desperate need for reinterpretation due to their acknowledgment that revelation inherently opposes their creed is their attempt to explain why the Prophet peace be upon him smiled after hearing the rabbi's statement. They claim that he smiled as in ridiculing him, not confirming what he said. This is ridiculous, to say the least, from multiple perspectives:

The first: What about the understanding of the companion Ibn Mas'ud, who explicitly stated, while he was present with the Prophet, peace be upon him, that he smiled in confirmation and not for any other reason? Does it not matter to them what the companions understood? The Kalamists agree that the companions were susceptible to anthropomorphism, and what's even more problematic is that the Prophet affirmed this for their benefit, as we shall discuss later.

The second is: Why would the Prophet, peace be upon him, smile at someone attributing deficiencies to God? Since these people think such descriptions are not just problematic but blasphemous, why would he smile at blasphemy, especially when he is known to be angered if God's rights are violated?

The third is: Why would he leave the Jewish rabbi in blasphemy and anthropomorphism? Was it not an opportunity for him to teach that God cannot have a hand or place the creation in His hand or fingers? Being silent in a place where truth should be told is an issue that the Prophet is exalted from.

The fourth is: After confirming what the man said, the Prophet recited a verse from the Quran that conveys a similar meaning, stating that God is going to fold the heavens in His hand and grasp the Earth.

In this verse and the authentic, widespread hadiths that explain it, which the scholars unanimously agree upon their authenticity and acceptance, it is evident that the heavens, the earth, and everything between them, in relation to the greatness of Allah Almighty, are more minuscule than to be within his grip except as a small object in the hands of one of us, such as that he rolls them like a ball is rolled.

Abdul Aziz ibn Abdullah ibn Abi Salama al-Majishun, the imam who is comparable to Malik, in his famous discourse, through which he refuted the Jahmites and their allies. He began his words by saying: "As for those who denied what the Lord described of Himself out of delving into complexities and over-exertion, the devils have led them astray on earth in confusion. They use their supposed reasoning to deny what the Lord described and named of Himself, arguing that if He has this, then He must also have that[50].

These desperate reinterpretations harm their methodologies more than benefit them, as they only expose their glaring opposition to revelation.

[50] The Salaf were always aware that what these people use is not reason but rather a twisted form of misguided thinking which they

perceive as reason, and then they begin using it as a criterion for God's revelation. You find them, even to this day, saying that if you affirm this, God must be like this or that; if you affirm this attribute, God must have this as well. This is absolute hallucination because they are measuring the unseen by what they have seen, using physics to understand metaphysics, as if God is similar to these beings and has the same implications they have. Therefore, they can only perceive Him through the lens of physics; if He has a certain attribute, it either has to be like that of creatures or it cannot be. Because that is the only lens they use to negate what they have denied, even if He has affirmed it! With this, you can imagine the kind of being they will end up affirming—either a non-existent entity or a rational paradox. This is why the most extremist among them reached the end of this hallucination and misguidance, denying the real existence of God, which to them became a mere mental existence. Following such a methodology, even existence, if attributed to Him, would resemble the existence of creatures, so they denied God's existence in the real sense entirely. These are the extremist philosophers. However, every sect of Kalamists is on a certain level of the ladder of heresy, with all of them on a path where their principles ultimately lead to atheism. All of this results from measuring God by His creatures and not submitting to His revelation. What evidence is there that if He has an attribute, it must be in a certain way like the creation? Has your empiricism covered God? Cannot the One who has no equal have attributes with no resemblance to anything else?

Thus, they are blinded by the obscure from the apparent, and denied what the Lord named of Himself by the silence of the Lord on what He did not name. The devil continued to teach them until they denied Allah's statement: "Faces, that Day, will be radiant, looking at their Lord"[51]. They said: 'No one will see Him on the Day of Resurrection,' thus denying—I swear by Allah—the greatest honor Allah has bestowed upon His allies on the Day of Resurrection, which is the vision of His face and His radiating of them: "In a seat of honor near a Sovereign, Perfect in Ability"[52].

It is decreed that they will never die, so by looking at Him, they are made radiant."[53]

Until he said: "They denied the vision of Allah on the Day of Resurrection to uphold their misguided and misleading argument, knowing that when Allah reveals Himself to them on the Day of Resurrection, they [the believers] will see what they

---

[51] Al-Qiyama: 22-23

[52] Al-Qamar: 55

[53] Affirming the vision:

Ahl Al-sunnah believe that the believers will see Allah Almighty with their eyes on the Day of Judgment, a belief which has been rejected and denied by the allies of Satan, who actually deserve such a belief; as the disbelievers will be prevented from seeing Allah Almighty, for this is the greatest blessing that believers will receive.

had believed in before, which is what they [the heretics] were in denial of![54] The Muslims asked: 'O Messenger of Allah, will we see our Lord on the Day of Resurrection?' The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: 'Do you struggle to see the sun without clouds?' They said: 'No.' He said: 'Do you struggle to see the full moon without clouds?' They said: 'No.' He said: 'You will see your Lord similarly.'"[55]

The Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him, said: "The Fire will not be filled until the Almighty places His foot in it, and it says: 'Enough, enough,' and it retracts on itself." He said to Thabit ibn Qais: "Allah has laughed at what you did with your guest last night."

He also said from what has reached us: "Indeed, Allah laughs from your despondency, despair, and the swiftness of His answer to you." A man from the Arabs asked: "Does our Lord

[54] This refers to the fact that, since these heretics disbelieved in and denied that God has a face as mentioned in His revelation, it was a necessary consequence for them to deny seeing His face in order to remain consistent with their twisted heresy.

[55] The similarity here is in the way that—by the grace of Allah—we are going to see Him, i,e. In a clear way, from the above direction, and with none of those who deserve to see Him being denied that vision. Just as people can see the full moon altogether, equally, and clearly if there are no clouds preventing them.

laugh?" He replied: "Yes." The man said: "We will not be deprived of goodness from a Lord who laughs."[56] There are similar reports of which we could not count.

Allah Almighty said: "He is the Hearing, the Seeing"[57], "And be patient for the decision of your Lord, for indeed, you

[56] The difference between the companions, who were upon pure innate disposition, and the heretic philosophers and Kalamists is that when they heard something from the messenger of God, if they had a question, they would ask it, and once they heard the answer, they accepted it. Just as in this example, the companion asked if our Lord laughs, and upon hearing that He does, he was amazed by it and saw it as an indication that a Lord who laughs shall definitely give His servants goodness. That's all the believer is required to believe. But as for the heretics, upon hearing that, due to their corrupt nature, they would indulge in: how does He laugh? How could He laugh? they would start anthropomorphizing Him and comparing Him with His creatures, until they end up concluding that: He cannot have such a description! Thus, they must deny it because they think they know better than God and His messenger, peace be upon him! This is the evil they brought on themselves, they cannot appreciate the beauty of Allah's perfect attributes, for what a beautiful, amazing thing to know that Allah is kind, loving, and he laughs with his beloved people, such a blessing the heretics can never feel unless they repent.

[57] Ash-Shura: 11

are in Our eyes"[58], and said: "That you might be brought up under My eye"[59]. He also said: "What prevented you from prostrating to what I created with My [two] hands?"[60], and "The entire earth will be within His grip on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens will be folded in His right hand. Exalted is He above what they associate with Him"[61].

By Allah, what indicated to them the greatness of what He described of Himself and what His grasp encompasses is only the insignificance of its counterpart among them. That is the understanding that was ingrained in their instinct and their hearts were created upon its knowledge. Therefore, what Allah described of himself, and named through his messenger, we affirm it as he named it. We are not required by him to know what is beyond it; neither this [attribute] or that. We do not deny what He described nor attempt [burden ourselves] to know what He did not describe." [end quote].[62]

[58] At-Tur: 48
[59] Taha: 39

[60] Sad: 75
[61] Az-Zumar: 67
[62] Imam al-dhahabi said: Abdul Aziz ibn Abdullah ibn Abi Salma, Maimon—or some say Dinar—the great Imam and Mufti, Abu Abdullah, and Abu Al-Asbagh Al-Taymi, Mawlahum from Medina, the

If that was the case; the creatures are like a ball, and this is His grasp and throwing of it, He has only illustrated to us from his greatness, the description of [all] creatures in relation to Him, with what we can comprehend as analogous from ourselves.[63]

Then, what is mentioned in the Qur'an and hadith explains that if He wills, He can grasp and treat them as described, as He will do on the Day of Resurrection. If He wills, He may not do so. [However], he is capable of grasping them and rolling them like a ball, which clearly indicates encompassing them. Yet if He wills, He may not do so. In any case, He is distinct from them and not attached to them.[64]

It is known that one of us—and to Allah belongs the highest example—if he holds a mustard seed, he can grasp it and his grip encompasses it, or if he wishes, he does not grasp it but

---

jurist, father of the Mufti Abdul Malik ibn Al-Majishoon, a companion of Malik [ibn Anas], and cousin of Yusuf ibn Yaqub Al-Majishoon.

[63] Meaning that he has given us analogies from our reality that we can comprehend, to illustrate the insignificance of all creation in relation to Him.

[64] Meaning that God's essence and the creature's essence are distinct and separate. God is not mixed with the creation, nor is the creation mixed with Him or attached to Him, and this is what scholars of Ahl as-Sunnah describe as "the boundary" or "the Hudd" between God and his creation.

makes it below him. In both cases, he is distinct from it. Thus, whether the Throne encompasses the creatures like a sphere encompassing its contents, or it is above them without encompassing them, like the earth's surface on which we are in relation to its core, or like a dome in relation to what is beneath it, or other than that. In either consideration, the Throne is above the creatures, and the Creator, exalted is He, is above it. The servant, in his orientation towards Allah, seeks the above direction, not the below. To complete this understanding, we proceed to clarify:

The third aspect:

We say: The Throne is either spherical like the celestial spheres, encompassing them, or it is above them without being spherical[65]. If it is the former, it is known by consensus among those who understand this that the celestial spheres are round and spherical, with the above direction being towards the perimeter[66], and the below direction towards the center. The celestial spheres have only two directions: above and below. As

[65] These are the two considerations upon which Shaykh Al-Islam built his response.

[66] The perimeter is any boundary around something. In this case, it is the entire surface of a sphere.

for the six directions, they pertain to living beings, who have six sides: one they face, which is in front of them, one they leave behind, which is behind them, one to their right, one to their left, one to their heads, and one to their feet. These six directions do not have inherent qualities in themselves, but are relative; what is right for one may be left for another, what is in front of one may be behind for another, and what is above for one may be below for another.

But the directions of above and below for the celestial spheres do not change;[67] the perimeter is the above and the center is the below, even though the surface of the earth, which Allah laid out for mankind and stabilized with mountains, is where people, animals, trees, plants, mountains, and flowing rivers are situated. As for the other side of the earth, it is encompassed by the ocean, and there are no human beings or anything associated with them there[68]. Even if we consider that

[67] Meaning that there are two absolute directions: above and below. As for the entities within these celestial spheres, the directions around them are relative and can change based on the position of the entity.

[68] This is again based on their perception of the planet, not knowing that beyond what they perceived to be only the ocean were other continents. Even with that, Shaykh Al-Islam says that if there were someone on that side, they would not be considered underneath those

someone is there, they would still be on the surface of the earth, and those on one side of the earth would not be considered beneath those on the other side, just as the celestial spheres surround the center, with neither side of the sphere being beneath the other, nor the north pole beneath the south pole, or vice versa.

Although the north pole appears to be above the earth to us, its elevation depends on the distance from the equator. For instance, if the distance from the equator is thirty degrees, the elevation of the pole at that point is thirty degrees, which is also referred to as the latitude of the location. Just as the surrounding sides of the earth and the spherical sides of the celestial sphere are not above or below each other, similarly, the animals, plants, and weights on the earth are not said to be beneath one another. This is merely an illusion that humans perceive, and it is as a relative "under"; like if an ant was walking under a ceiling, [still] the ceiling is above it even if its legs are aligned with it.

---

who are on the northern hemisphere. Rather, since the surface direction of the sphere is the above direction, they would also be in elevation from that side, without either side being considered above the other, as he further explained.

Similarly, if someone is hung upside down, they are still under the sky, even if their feet are towards it. Also when a person is on one side of the earth or the celestial sphere, they may imagine the other side as being beneath them. This matter is undisputed among those who believe the celestial spheres are round[69].

The roundness of the celestial spheres just as it is the view of astronomers and mathematicians, it is also the position of the Muslim scholars, as mentioned by Abu al-Hasan ibn al-Munadi, Abu Muhammad ibn Hazm, Abu al-Faraj ibn al-Jawzi, and others that it is agreed upon among the Muslim scholars[70]. Allah

[69] Therefore, regardless of which side of the planet a person is on, it is not said that they are above those on the other side, nor are those on the other side beneath them. This perception of being below is merely relative and an illusion created by the mind, as it perceives what goes towards its feet to be under. Shaykh Al-Islam will further elaborate on until what point it is belowness, and at what point it is not.

[70] Shaykh Al-Islam reported consensus of scholars that all celestial spheres are spherical, including the Earth. Everything is spherical, and— God knows best—even the universe is spherical, with each of its celestial bodies swimming in its specific round orbit as decreed and determined by God Almighty. He said: "Know that it is agreed upon that the Earth is spherical in shape and is mostly surrounded by water." *Majmu' al-Fatawa* (5/150)

said: "It is He who created the night and the day and the sun and the moon; all [heavenly bodies] in an orbit are swimming"[71]. Ibn Abbas said: "An orbit like the spindle whorl."

The term 'falak' in Arabic refers to something circular, as in the phrase "the maiden's breast [Tafallak]" when it develops a round shape. Anyone who knows that the celestial spheres are circular understands that the perimeter is higher than the center from all sides. Whoever imagines that a person on one side of the celestial sphere is beneath someone on the opposite [side], in the actual sense, then that person is in illusion, according to them.

Given this, if the Throne were considered spherical and encompassing all creations, it would be their above point and their ceiling, thus being absolutely over them[72]. Therefore, the

[71] Al-Anbiya: 33

[72] The throne is the ceiling of all creation, upon which the Lord Almighty is established [Mustawi]. He is described as being above it seven times in the Qur'an. Ahl al-Sunnah affirm this attribute of God as befitting His majesty, and as He described Himself numerous times, mentioning it always as an attribute of honor and something He glorifies Himself with; being the creator of the heavens and the Earth and the one who is above His throne. This description, like any other attribute God described Himself with, is affirmed by Muslims as an attribute of perfection.

However, as we have elaborated previously, the heretics, due to their indulgence in the diseases of hearts, measure the Creator against the creation and do not affirm what He said, because they have not revered Him as He should be revered. They have no evidence whatsoever to prevent the affirmation of such an attribute for God, except their usual hallucinations, claiming that if He were above, it would mean He is in a location, and whatever is in a location must be confined, and what is confined is created. This argument is nonsensical and based on an Aristotelian concept of place which is itself irrational and incoherent. [*see Aristotle, "Physics," Book IV, Chapter 4, 212a20-21. translated by Jonathan Barnes*]

If God is above or located over the universe, this does not necessitate that He is within a creature called place. Rather, it is just God Himself being above the throne, distinct from those other than him, below him! For the concept of space is merely mental, and there is no hypothetical entity "place" that surrounds entities if they exist in the external world; it is just the entities existing themselves.

Besides being scripturally incoherent, this view is rationally erroneous as it would entail an infinite regress; If place is an entity in which everything must be, and God created the world in place, that entity "place" itself would require a prior entity, and that requires another.. leading to an infinite regress, which is impossible. Therefore, upon

scrutiny, whatever is used to deny what God affirmed for Himself is in and of itself incoherent and contradictory. This contradiction manifests even in their position: due to their denial of God being above creation; out of the boundaries of this universe, they assert that He is neither inside the world nor outside. Anyone who hears this can detect the glaring contradiction, as it combines two propositions that are contrary to one another. If something is not inside a particular field, it is necessarily outside; conversely, if it is outside a certain field, it cannot simultaneously be inside of it. Thus, the proposition that a real, external, independent entity is neither in the world nor outside of it is inherently contradictory.

For those who affirm that God exists or at least claim to do so, we ask: If God truly exists externally, ontologically, and independently from creation, and He created creation distinct from Himself, then the question arises: Where is this creation in relation to God's essence? Heretics often say it is prohibited to ask where God is, even though the Prophet (peace be upon him) himself asked this. For the sake of argument, we are not asking where God is; we are merely asking where we are; Where is creation in relation to this deity who has always existed prior to us, if there is truly a relationship of otherness between the two existences? I have asked this question to numerous people and have never received a satisfactory answer because they cannot answer it without breaking the foundation of their creed. Whoever attempts to answer will either acknowledge the contradiction or continue in their misguidance by comparing God’s existence to mental concepts and

human being does not direct themselves to it and to what is over it, except from the perspective of elevation, not from its remaining directions.

If someone were to direct themselves to the ninth or eighth celestial sphere or any other sphere from any direction other than upwards, they would be considered ignorant by consensus of rational people. So, how about directing oneself to the Throne or what is above it? While at the very most of what the Throne could be; a spherical shape, and Allah Almighty encompasses all creations in a manner befitting His Majesty, as the seven heavens and the earth in His hand are smaller than a mustard seed in one of our hands.

---

abstractions, which is the rational endpoint of their heresy. And one should not be surprised that they actually do so. In my case, just recently a so-called shaikh attempted to answer my question—by claiming he is not required to do so—and ended up upholding the second possibility I illustrated, by stating that God is not part of reality. I question whether a person in their right mind would make such a claim. If God is not part of reality, then what is He part of? Phantasm? Illusion? This is not merely the opinion of one ignorant individual; even certain figures revered by heretics explicitly speak of God's existence as the existence of emotions and feelings, which do not go beyond the realm of mental abstractions.

As for the one's inquiry that: if the Throne is spherical and Allah is from beyond it, encompassing it and distinct from it, then what is the benefit of the servant directing themselves to Allah in prayer and worship by seeking elevation rather than belowness, as in that case—during supplication—there would be no difference between seeking the upward direction or any other one that surrounds the supplicant? In spite of that, we find in our hearts a natural inclination to seek the elevation, not turning right or left. Inform us then about this necessity we find in our hearts, which we are innately created upon!

It can be said: This question arises from the misconception that half of the celestial sphere is beneath the earth and beneath those people and animals who are on the [upper] surface of the Earth. This is a significant error. For if the celestial sphere were beneath the earth from one direction, it would be beneath it from all directions, necessitating that the celestial sphere must be absolutely beneath the earth, which is a reversal of realities since the celestial sphere is absolutely above the earth.

Astronomers assert that if the Earth were perforated[73] towards the direction of our feet and something heavy like a stone were dropped into the perforation, it would reach the center. If another stone were dropped from the opposite direction, both would meet at the center. If it were assumed that

[73] Pierced with a hole.

two people met at the center instead of two stones, their feet would meet, with neither being beneath the other; both would be above the center and both would be beneath the celestial sphere, just as the east and west, where if a person were in the east, either in the sky or on Earth, and another in the west, either in the sky or on Earth, neither would be beneath the other, irrespective of whether their heads, feet, stomachs, or backs are towards the sky or the Earth[74]. If one's objective is above the celestial sphere, it can only be sought from the upper direction, not from the feet, right, or left for two reasons:

First, the objective from the upper direction is closer than from all other directions. If a man or an angel were ascending to the sky or beyond, it would be closest to ascend from the head direction, if possible. No rational person would suggest piercing

[74] This is to highlight that moving from the center towards elevation from any direction implies that the object is moving from a lower point to an upper point. Even if two objects are moving in opposite directions, beginning from the center of the sphere, they are both moving towards elevation, with neither being underneath the other. The center is: the point at which descending ends if coming from the surface part of the sphere or above it, and the point at which ascending begins, continuing the movement in the same straight line away from the center in the opposite direction towards the other side of the surface of the shape or above it.

the Earth and then ascending from the other side, nor going right, left, forward, or backward across the Earth and then ascending, because whichever place they went to would be equivalent to or even lower than their starting place, and the celestial sphere would still be above them. This would make going to the other five directions redundant and tiring without benefit.

If a person wanted to address the sun or the moon, they would only address it from the upper direction, despite the sun and moon rising and setting, deviating from the zenith[75]. How much more so for someone who is always above everything, never vanishing or disappearing, exalted be He?

Just as a moving object, like a stone, seeks its point of settlement through the shortest path, which is a straight line, the intentional pursuit in the hearts of servants would not deviate from the straight and near path to a long, indirect one. Allah has naturally created His servants upon sanity and rectitude, unless they are misled by the devils and driven away from their innate nature they were created upon.

The second reason is that if one aims downwards without elevation, their aim ends at the center. If they aim forward,

[75] The point of the celestial sphere that is directly opposite the nadir and vertically above the observer.

backward, right, or left without elevation, their aim would end in parts of the air. Therefore, aiming upwards is necessary, whether they also aim along with it in these other directions or not.

If someone said they aimed to the right with [intending] elevation or to the bottom with elevation, it would be like someone saying they want to perform Hajj from the west by first going to Khorasan, then to Mecca. Or even like saying they want to ascend to the celestial spheres by first descending to the Earth, then ascending from the other side. Although this is possible in theory, it is impossible [in practice] due to the refusal of the seeker to [seriously] intend it, as it is contrary to innate nature. A seeker aims to reach their objective by the shortest path, especially if their objective is their worshipped deity whom they adore and rely on. If they direct themselves away from the straight path, their pursuit becomes inverted and distorted[76].

[76] This means that even when considering that those on the opposite side of the Earth's sphere point towards elevation directly above their heads—an opposite direction from our perspective—it does not imply that one would seek God through the opposite side just because it leads to elevation from that side as well. This is contrary to our innate nature, which inclines us to pursue what is directly in front of us rather than what is obstructed by the entire Earth as an immediate obstacle. Additionally, from a technical perspective, if one is facing the Earth

Furthermore, such a person would be combining both affirmation and negation in their pursuit; simultaneously drawing nearer to and distancing themselves from their objective, desiring it, yet evading it. Because if one directs themselves from the farthest point while neglecting the nearest, they combine contradictory intents, leading to an incomplete pursuit, as complete intent negates its opposite and contrary. This is intuitively known.

If a person truly loves the Prophet, peace be upon him with a perfect love, and intends to seek him, or loves some other beloved—whether this love is praiseworthy or blameworthy—when the love is complete, they pursue their beloved through the shortest path. However, if the love is conflicted, such as loving something disliked in religion, desire calls them towards it while their mind deters them, leading to a roundabout pursuit. This is akin to the common saying, "One step forward, one step back."

---

instead of Heaven, they would be facing the Earth's center; the lowest point of the sphere. Even if theoretically extending beyond that leads to elevation from the other side, it is still not from our side. Thus, we direct ourselves to God from the side that is suitable for us. Just as if someone wanted to point towards the sky, they would not point towards their feet simply because those on the opposite side have the sky from that perspective as well! This would be an agreed upon sophistry.

Similarly, if a person has a deficiency in their religion, and their mind directs them towards the mosque, jihad, or other religiously loved pursuits disliked by the Nafs (self), they keep pursuing it through a long path in a slow manner. This is all intuitively known.

Likewise, if the seeker does not intend to move physically but intends to address their desired one and invoke them, they address them from the nearest direction where their call can be heard, and their objective achieved if their intent is complete. If someone were in a high place, and another person called out to them, they would direct their call upwards. If they were to place their head in a well and call out so their voice could be heard, it would be possible, but it is not natural to do this unless there is an overriding benefit. Only when intent is weak [or compromised] do they act thus.

The hadith of (Lowering)[77] Narrated from Abu Hurayra and Abu Dharr may Allah be pleased with them and reported by Tirmidhi and others from Al-Hasan Al-Basri from Abu Hurayra is interrupted, as Al-Hasan did not hear from Abu Hurayra. However, it is corroborated by Abu Dharr's hadith. If authentic, its meaning aligns with this. For his statement: "If one of you were to lower a rope, it would descend upon Allah" is but a hypothetical consideration, which means; If it happened,

[77] Hadith Al-'idlaa'

it would descend upon Him, but it is impossible for anyone "to lower" anything upon Allah; because He is exalted by His essence. If something were lowered towards the Earth, it would stop at the center and not ascend to the other side. However, if the hypothetical descent were assumed, the stated conclusion follows[78].

[78] This means that, regardless of the authenticity of such a report, it does not contradict our earlier statements about God's exaltedness and His encompassing of the entire universe. Instead, it appears to support this notion, suggesting that if someone were to descend or lower a rope, it would ultimately reach God. This concept of descent however is relative—as Ibn Taymiyyah will shortly expand on—depending on the perspective of the individual performing the action. Just as inhabitants on one side of the Earth are not considered beneath those on the opposite side, despite their perceived position, so too would the rope's descent eventually reach a point where the direction reverses to ascend once it reaches the center of the lowest point, beyond which elevation begins anew. Thus, if authentic, the report implies that any descent from a point would ultimately lead to elevation, culminating in reaching God Almighty, who is above the universe from every angle. This movement could either be from a higher point towards a lower point, which, if extended, would again lead to elevation, or it could start from the lowest point in any direction, moving towards absolute elevation and passing its through various degrees within the heavens until reaching the boundary of the throne upon which there is the one to whom absolute elevation

Thus, what the questioner mentioned: if it were assumed that the servant aimed from that direction, Allah Almighty would hear their speech, and they would be directing their heart towards Him. However, this is invalidated by the innate nature, as complete intent towards something negates intending its opposite. Just as the upper direction essentially negates the lower direction, similarly intent towards the Most High by essence negates seeking him from below. Just as something descending into the Earth's core cannot ascend from that side due to its high elevation, repelling the descending object by its height, similarly, the upper direction from our perspective repels what ascends to it of heavy objects. A heavy object does not ascend except by an elevating force lifting it, countering its inherent force from falling down. Likewise, what descends from above the Earth down to its center does not ascend from that point to that other surface except with an elevating force lifting it, countering its inherent force from falling down to the center. If the lifting force is stronger, it would be [considered] ascending

belongs. In relation to God, the universe represents belowness and is thus in a lower position. Therefore, since God, with His essence is elevated above the universe, any movement towards Him Almighty is inherently a movement towards elevation.

with the object towards the celestial sphere from that side, and ascending towards Allah[79].

It is only called descending considering the minds of those addressed perceive what aligns with their feet as lowered and call it descending along with describing the action as lowering, but it would be true descent towards the center, from there onward, it would be extending of the rope and bucket, not lowering. Both the conclusion and [its] condition are conceptual, not actual. Because he said: "If it were lowered, it would descend; meaning that if lowering were assumed, descending would also be assumed. It would be actual descending and lowering if it were assumed that the heavens are beneath the Earth, which is a rejected assumption. However, its benefit is to illustrate the encompassing and elevation from every side. This hypothetical scenario is impossible for us and we cannot

[79] Ibn Taymiyyah's notion that objects fall towards the center of the Earth implies an early conceptualization of gravity as a force directed towards a central point. This aligns with the intuitive idea that objects fall due to a force pulling them downwards. Also, his idea that elevating an object requires a counteracting force is in line with the basic principles of dynamics. This concept reflects an understanding of the need for force to overcome gravity, similar to what would later be formalized as Newton's third law of motion (for every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction).

actualize it, for it cannot be perceived to lower, nor can it be perceived for anything to descend upon Allah, but Allah is capable of causing a breakthrough from here to there with a rope. Yet, in His case, it would not be lowering [but lifting], thus, it would not be descending upon Him [rather, ascending towards him].

It is like if he passed a rope from one pole to the other, or from the east where the sun rises to the west where it sets, and we suppose that the rope passes through the center of the earth, Allah is capable of achieving all of that. To Him,—based on this hypothesis—it makes no difference whether the rope penetrates from our right side to the left side, from our front to our back, or from the direction of our heads to the direction of our feet if the rope passes through the earth. In every such scenario, the rope has penetrated from one side of the surrounding sphere to the other, passing through the center. Given His grasp encompassing the heavens and the earth, the rope that hypothetically penetrates through the universe reaches Him, and none of this is termed, in relation to Him, as descending or lowering.

As for us, what lies beneath our feet is beneath us, and what is above our heads is above us. What we lower from the direction of our heads towards our feet we imagine as descending. Thus, if it were assumed that one of us lowered a rope, it would be

[perceived as] descending upon what is there. However, this is an impossible assumption for us, and the intention behind it is to illustrate the encompassing [reality] of the Creator, exalted be He, as He has illustrated by stating that He grasps the heavens and folds the earth, among other descriptions that convey His encompassing of all creation[80].

This is why, upon completing this hadith, He read: "He is the First and the Last, the Ascendant and the Intimate[81], and He is, of all things, Knowing"[82] All of this holds if the hadith is authenticated, for when al-Tirmidhi narrated it, he explained that some scholars of hadith interpreted it as [the rope] descending upon Allah's knowledge. Some proponents of incarnation [Hulul] and unionism [Ittihād][83] falsely assume that

[80] In summary, the whole aim of such a report is to demonstrate and illustrate what we have repeated numerous times: that from any direction towards elevation, one reaches the Lord Almighty, who is encompassing of all the universe as if it is within His grip, which is mentioned that He will certainly be doing on the Day of Resurrection when He grasps the creations.

[81] It could be translated also as the apparent and the innermost.

[82] Al-Hadid: 3

[83] The doctrines of incarnation [Hulul] and unionism [Ittihād] are considered blasphemous. This becomes clear when we understand their meanings. Incarnation means that God incarnates in some of His creations and unites with them, similar to the Christians' belief in God

incarnating in Christ, Jesus son of Mary, and some people's belief in God incarnating in Al-Hallaj and in some Sufi sheikhs. Shaykh al-Islam said: "There has not been [any standard] information about them since the emergence of the Tatar state. Otherwise, the old concept of unionism was a specific unionism. This is because the division is fourfold: each of incarnation and unionism is either specific to a person or general. As for the specific unionism and incarnation, is like the Christians' belief and the extremists regarding the Imams from the Rafidha and the ignorant Sufi Fuqara' regarding the sheikhs', they assert it in a specific individual: either by unionism, like the union of water and milk, which is the belief of the Jacobites (the Sudanese, some Ethiopians, and Copts), or by incarnation, which is the belief of the Nestorians, or by unionism in some respects but not others, which is the belief of the Melkites. As for the general incarnation, which means that God Himself incarnates in everything, this is something that Ahl-Sunnah and the Salaf attribute to the ancient Jahmites, and they would declare them disbelievers for it. As for what these people brought regarding general unionism, I have not known anyone who preceded them except those who denied the existence of the Creator, like Pharaoh and the Qarmatians. Because the reality of their matter is that they believe that the very existence of God is the same as the existence of creation, and that the existence of God's essence, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, is the same as the existence of the created beings. They do not conceive that God created anything besides him, nor that He is the Lord of the worlds, nor that He is self-sufficient and everything else is in need of Him. However, they

this hadith supports their false claims, suggesting that He exists with his essence within every place and that His existence is the existence of the places themselves, or similar such claims.

The correct position is that the hadith does not indicate any of that, even if it were affirmed. For his statement: "If one were to lower a rope, it would descend.." signifies that He is not within the person lowering, nor within the rope, nor within the bucket, nor within anything else. [in fact] this necessitates that He is from that direction[84]. Likewise, interpreting it as referring to knowledge is clearly erroneous, similar to the misinterpretations of the Jahmites[85]. Rather, if authenticated, it would indicate encompassing.

---

diverged into three paths, and most of those who look upon their words do not understand the reality of their matter because it is obscure. Majmoo' Al-fatawa 2/465-466.

[84] This means if such a report indicated Hulul, it would not state that God is found at the end of that side, rather he would be everywhere, including there at that first point and in the objects around it, which is not the case.

[85] The Jahmites: a sect of extreme Murji'ah, associated with Jahm ibn Safwan, who was executed in 128 AH. Ibn Taymiyyah said: "The emergence of Jahm and his doctrine of denying the divine attributes, in addition to his views on determinism [Jabr] and Irja', occurred in the late

Umayyad period, after the appearance of the Qadariyyah, the Mu'tazilah, and others" (Majmu' al-Fatawa, 8/460).

Ibn al-Qayyim said: "When the Jahmiyyah increased in number in the late era of the Tabi'un, they were the first to oppose revelation with reason. Despite this, they were few in number at first and were subdued and condemned by the scholars. Their leader was Al-Ja'd ibn Dirham. His teachings gained some acceptance because he was the teacher of Marwan ibn Muhammad and his mentor; hence, Marwan was called 'Al-Ja'di.' On account of Al-Ja'd ibn Dirham, Allah took away the kingdom and caliphate from the Umayyads, scattered them across the lands, and tore them apart. When his teachings became known among the Muslims, Khalid ibn Abdullah al-Qasri, who was the governor of Iraq, sought him out. When he captured him, he addressed the people on the day of Eid al-Adha and concluded his sermon with, 'O people, sacrifice, may Allah accept your sacrifices. I am sacrificing Al-Ja'd ibn Dirham, for he claimed that Allah did not speak to Moses directly and did not take Abraham as a close friend. Exalted is Allah above what Al-Ja'd claims.' Then he descended and slaughtered him at the base of the pulpit" (Al-Sawa'iq al-Mursalah, 3/1070).

Among the extremists of the Jahmiyyah was Bishr ibn Ghiyath al-Marisi, who died in 218 AH. Al-Ghazi said in his biography: "He studied fiqh under Abu Yusuf the Qadi and engaged in kalam. Shocking statements and controversial beliefs were attributed to him, causing the scholars to speak ill of him and most of them to declare him an

As for that, it is known that Allah is capable of encompassing and that it will occur on the Day of Judgment, as indicated by the Quran and the Sunnah. There is nothing in affirming it generally that conflicts with reason or [divine] law, However, we only speak of what we know, and what we do not

---

unbeliever. He was a significant misfortune of his time, it was known that he was not adhering to any particular religion or school of thought. In Al-Jawahir, it is mentioned that he studied fiqh under Abu Yusuf and excelled in it, but he delved into kalam and philosophy. Al-Saimari said: 'Bishr ibn Ghiyath al-Marisi had many writings and narrations from Abu Yusuf. He was known for his piety and asceticism, but people distanced themselves from him due to his fame in indulging in Ilm al-Kalam. Abu Yusuf himself condemned him.' Al-'Ijli said: 'I saw Bishr al-Marisi once—may Allah curse him—a short, unattractive man with dirty clothes, abundant hair, resembling the Jews. His father was a Jewish dyer in Kufa. May Allah not have mercy on him; he was a deviant.' Abu Zur'ah al-Razi said: 'Bishr al-Marisi was a zindeeq (heretic),' and Yazid ibn Harun incited the people of Baghdad to kill him" (Al-Tabaqat al-Saniyyah fi Tarajim al-Hanafiyyah, 2/230-235, summarized).

Many of Bishr al-Marisi's deviations were detailed by the Imam Uthman al-Darimi in his well-known book, titled "Refutation of the Stubborn Jahmite Marisi, by Imam Abu Sa'id Uthman ibn Sa'id al-Darimi."

know, we refrain from. If the premise of a given argument for something is uncertain to some, it is appropriate for them to doubt it until the truth becomes clear, otherwise, they should remain silent about what they do not know.

If this becomes clear, then similar to that; the one who seeks him while aiming at that direction. If it was supposed that we have done that, then we would be seeking him upon this given consideration. However, our intent for him through pursuing that direction is negated in our case, for the complete, decisive pursuit necessitates seeking the objective with what is possible[86].

For this reason, as explained elsewhere when discussing the dispute among people regarding pure intention without action—whether one is punished for it or not—we clarified that decisive will necessitates the actor to do what is within his capability regarding the intended. If he does not do what is within his power, his will is not decisive but rather remains a mere inclination, and whoever inclines towards an evil deed but does not do it is not written against him, and if he leaves it for [the sake of] Allah, it is written for him as a good deed.

[86] Meaning, if a person has a decisive intent to seek God, he should do so from the direction accessible and closest to him, and not claim that just because God encompasses the universe, he would then invoke Him from a direction opposite to what is in front of him, as that would not be seeking the objective with what is possible.

This is why there is a distinction between the inclination of Prophet Yusuf, peace be upon him and the inclination of the Chief Minister's wife. As Imam Ahmad said: "Inclinations are of two kinds: transient [87] inclinations and resolute [88] inclinations." Yusuf, peace be upon him inclined with a transient inclination that he left for [the sake of] Allah and was rewarded for it, while she inclined with a resolute inclination and did what she could to achieve her desire, even though she did not achieve her objective.

Those who say that one is punished for the mere intention cite the saying of the Prophet, peace be upon him: "When two Muslims confront each other with swords, both the murderer and the one murdered are in the Fire." They said: "O Messenger of Allah, this is [clear] for the murderer, but what about the one murdered?" He replied: "He [also] intended to murder his companion." In another narration: "He was keen on murdering his companion."

This one had a decisive intention and did what he could, even though he did not achieve his objective. He is like the Chief Minister's wife. Therefore, whenever the intention is decisive, the seeker must do what he can to achieve the intended. If he can achieve his objective by a direct path, then it is impossible while

[87] Lasting only for a short time; impermanent.
[88] Marked by firm determination.

having a decisive intention [to attempt] to achieve it by a reversed, distant path.

Hence, it is inherently precluded in the actions of the servants during their time of dire need and supplication to Allah Almighty, while having complete intention towards Him—to direct themselves to Him except in a straight direction, aiming towards elevation without deviation to other directions, because it is the straight, close path. Any other path involves distance, deviation, and length. Thus, with complete intention, which is the state of the supplicant, worshiper, and desperate seeker; He rejects to direct himself except towards elevation, and spurns to seek Him through another direction, just as it is impossible for him to lower a rope that would descend upon Him. This is the explanation, and Allah knows best.

As for the standpoint of Sharia, the messengers, peace be upon them, were sent to perfect and confirm the innate disposition (fitrah), not to alter or change it. The Prophet, peace be upon him, stated in the agreed-upon hadith: "Every newborn is born upon the fitrah, but his parents make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian, just as the animal gives birth to a perfect offspring. Do you detect any deformity?"[89]

[89] And from the Fitrah the prophets came to confirm is the belief of God's elevation upon his creation. Having already deconstructed one

of the pillars upon which heretics deny God's elevation, namely the concept of place, it is now pertinent to address the second pillar: the concept of privation and possession (adam and malaka) from Greek logic. By addressing this, we aim to provide a comprehensive deconstruction of major heretical fundamentals by the conclusion of this book. First we should understand that in Aristotelian logic, propositions can be opposed in four ways:

1. **Contradiction**: Two propositions are contradictory if the truth of one implies the falsehood of the other, and vice versa. They cannot both be true, nor can they both be false. This opposition occurs between an existent and a nonexistent; a positive and a negative.
    - **Example**: "You exist" vs. "You do not exist."
2. **Contrariety**: Two propositions are contrary if they cannot both be true, but they can both be false. This opposition occurs between two existents.
    - **Example**: "The shirt is white" vs. "The shirt is black." Both can be false if the shirt is blue.
3. **Relativity**: This refers to a relationship between two entities that are interdependent. This opposition also occurs between two existents.
    - **Example**: "A is the father of B" vs. "B is the child of A."

4. **Privation and Possession**: Privation is the lack of a quality or form normally required by the nature of a thing. It is a type of contrariety, while possession refers to the presence of that quality. This opposition occurs between a positive and a negative.

    - **Example**: "The blind man lacks sight" vs. "The sighted man has sight."

The issue arises from the fourth category, which we shall examine to understand their usage.

Their argument posits that when discussing God, one must distinguish between contradictions and contrarieties:

- "God is either inside the world or not inside the world" is a proper contradiction.
- "God is inside or outside the world" is a proper contrariety.

However, we shall demonstrate that it is an improper contrariety. Nonetheless, they argue that if God is neither inside nor outside the world, it would not result in a contradiction due to the lack of potentiality. For example, a wall is neither seeing nor blind, and this is not a contradiction since the wall has no potential for sight or blindness. [They compare Allah to a wall.] However, this argument conflates contradictions with contrarieties, relies on Aristotelian categorization,

and misunderstands the nature of "inside and outside," particularly in Arabic, as we shall see.

Contradictions vs. Contrarieties:

Contradictions: Two propositions that cannot both be true and cannot both be false. If one is true, the other must be false.

Contrarieties: Two propositions that cannot both be true, but can both be false.

We argue that the propositions "inside and outside" are contradictions, not contrarieties that could be simultaneously negated from a negative subject. In Arabic, "inside" (داخل) and "outside" (خارج) are used as contradictions. If we say something is not inside (لا داخل), we are necessarily saying it is outside (خارج). There is no middle ground where both can be false. Thus, the correct rational form of the proposition should be: "God is either inside the world or outside the world."

In Greek, it is different. Aristotelian logic is interconnected with its Greek language and background. The opposite is not affirmed unless the subject can have such an attribute [a positive subject]. This trick allows them to argue that God has no potential to be described by inside and outside, thus, it is not a contradiction to say: neither in nor out.

However, the Arabic language, which God used to communicate with people, does not employ the concept of privation and possession in this way. For instance, a peripatetic logician might claim an idol is neither alive nor dead, and will not say it's dead because it lacks the potential for life and death. However, God addresses idols as "dead" in the Quran, treating life and death as contradictions that cannot both be false simultaneously.

He said about the idols:

> "*They are dead, not alive—not even knowing when their followers will be resurrected*." [16:21]

In fact, a subject that can have a quality of perfection yet lacks it is more perfect than a subject that is normally incapable of having it. For example, a mute person is more perfect than a mute rock. Ironically, this is the same argument heretics use when faced with the reality of their mute, unheard deity. They argue that he is not necessarily mute because he has no potential for the attribute of voice, like a wall that is not described as mute or speaking because it simply lacks such a quality. To that, we say, it is indeed mute, and simply restating your view is a sufficient response to you.

Demonstrating the Fallacy:

The original argument incorrectly treats "inside the world" and "outside the world" as contraries rather than contradictions. The

statement "God is either inside the world or not inside the world" is a contradiction by their admission, and we say "not inside the world" effectively means "outside the world," as demonstrated. Thus, the proposition "God is either inside or outside the world" is not incorrect but a valid expression of contradiction. Denying both results in a rational contradiction, similar to stating that something is both "not visible" and "not invisible."

Summary

Their reliance on a categorization fundamentally foreign to the language of revelation is flawed. They use this categorization to avoid contradiction with God's revelation. However, the statement "neither inside the world nor outside it" is contradictory. Even if we grant, for the sake of argument, that something could exist neither inside nor outside due to a lack of potentiality, why is this relevant to God? Where is their proof that God has no potential to be outside the world? Is it not that every external, ontological, independent entity is necessarily either inside or outside another external, ontological, independent entity? Their stance is mere heretical speculation that opposes a flood of verses and hadiths from revelation. We have shown that this division is fallacious, at least from an Arabic perspective, and falls under the first category of contradiction. Therefore, whoever affirms a god "neither inside the world nor outside" is either affirming an impossible entity or an abstraction with no external reality [as we concluded with our refutation of the first

Allah Almighty said: "So direct your face toward the religion, inclining to truth. [It is] the fitrah of Allah upon which He has created [all] people. No change should there be in the creation of Allah. That is the correct religion, but most of the people do not know"[90].

Thus, Sharia in worship and supplication aligns with the fitrah, unlike what the misguided polytheists, Sabians, philosophers, and others practice, for they have altered the fitrah in both knowledge and will, opposing both reason and revelation, as we have elaborated elsewhere.

It has been established in the two authentic collections through multiple chains that the Prophet, peace be upon him, said: "When one of you stands to pray, he should not spit in front of him, for Allah is in front of him, nor to his right, for there is an angel on his right, but it should be to his left or under his foot." In another narration, it is mentioned that "he permitted the one to spit in their piece of garment."

principle], similar to the intellect philosophers label as the first cause, but certainly not the God of Muhammad, peace be upon him.

[90] Quran 30:30

In the well-known hadith narrated by Abu Razin, when the Prophet, peace be upon him, informed that there is no one but will be alone with his Lord, Abu Razin asked: "How can He be alone with us, O Messenger of Allah, while He is one, and we are numerous?" The Prophet replied: "I will inform you of a similitude of that in the signs of Allah. This moon—one of Allah's signs—all of you [simultaneously] see it; being alone with it. If so, Allah is greater."

It is known that when someone addresses the moon, if he were to do so, he would only face it with his face, while it is above him. Thus, He faces it with his face despite its elevation. It is against fitrah to turn one's back to it while addressing it having a complete intent to it, even though that might be possible. One does so only when he does not intend to address it directly, just as someone not intending to address a person turns away from him and speaks to another, so he may hear the speech. However, when the barrier is removed, one faces him directly. Similarly, when a servant stands for prayer, he faces his Lord, while he is above him, He calls upon Him from directly ahead, not from his right or his left, and He calls upon Him from above, not from below, just as if it were considered that he is addressing the moon.

It is established in the two authentic collections that he said: "People must desist from lifting their visions in prayer, or their

visions will not return to them." Scholars agree that raising one's eyes to the heaven during prayer is forbidden. Ahmad narrated from Muhammad bin Sirin that the Prophet, peace be upon him, used to raise his vision in prayer until Allah revealed: "Certainly will the believers have succeeded: They who are during their prayer humbly submissive" [91]**, after which his vision would not extend beyond his place of prostration. This is what Sharia has brought to complete the fitrah; for a supplicant who is commanded to be humble [to have khushū'], which is submissiveness, and quietness, it is not suitable for him to stare toward whom he is calling upon and asking. Rather, it is appropriate for him to be quiet and lower his gaze before him.**

Forbidding the worshiper from raising his gaze during prayer is not a refutation of the affirmers who say that He is on the Throne, as some ignorant Jahmites think. The Jahmites believe there is no difference between the Throne and the bottom of the sea, as both are the same to them. If that were the case, it would not have been forbidden to raise the vision to one direction, and be ordered to lower it to another, as these two directions are the same to the Jahmites[92]**.**

[91] Quran 23:1-2

[92] This is in reference to the ancient Jahmites who, as We have seen previously, believed that God is incarnated in the world. They thought that this report provided evidence against those who say God is

Moreover, if that were the case, the prohibition against raising one's gaze would apply to all conditions of the servant. But Allah Almighty said: "We have certainly seen the turning of your face, [O Muhammad], toward the heaven"[93].

Thus, the servant is not prohibited from raising his gaze in an absolute sense, but he is forbidden during the time he is commanded to be humble [to have khushū'], for lowering the gaze is part of complete humility [khushū'], as Allah Almighty said: "Their eyes humbled, they will emerge from the graves"[94], and "You will see them humbled from humiliation, looking with a faint glance"[95] Furthermore, if there was prohibition against raising the vision to the heaven, while there is no deity above the heaven, there would be no difference between raising it to the heaven or lowering it to all directions. If the intention were to

upon the throne. However, as Ibn Taymiyya demonstrates, it's actually the opposite. The report indeed indicates that God is upon the throne, but the worshiper during prayer is forbidden from looking above because they are required to have full Khushu' before the Lord Almighty. This requirement does not align with staring and looking directly towards the king, which indeed shows that He is in the direction above. This same reply applies to all other groups who deny God being on the Throne in reality.

[93] Al-baqara: 144
[94] Al-Qamar : 7
[95] Ash-Shuraa: 45

forbid people from believing that Allah is above the heaven or intending by their hearts to direct themselves towards elevation, he would have explained that to them as he explained all other rulings[96].

[96] This idea had perplexed the minds of those who held a different belief from Ahl Sunnah, and they usually received questions like this: If God truly wanted people to believe in what these Kalamists teach, why is it not detailed in His book as other matters are? On the contrary, He endorses quite the opposite! The answer they give to that is as hard to accept as their belief, which, in summary, is that God and His Prophet, peace be upon him could not guide people into the truth, because their intellects were not capable of perceiving it in the way the Kalamists describe. So, they had told them that which aligns with their innate disposition for the general benefit of society, even if it was not correct in reality. For example, Al-Taftazani, who was an Ash'ari, states that revelation is flooded with numerous passages indicating the aboveness of God and acknowledges the absence of anything that clearly contradicts it. He then tries to resolve the quandary of rejecting revelation with the typical Ash'ari delusion, which states that God had to use anthropomorphism because that's all laymen could understand, even though that contradicts reason [which, in this case, is actually Aristotle's concept of place]. He said in the context of what can be done with this unlimited number of passages about attributes [which they call anthropomorphic]:

"The answer is that they are speculative (based on hearing) in opposition to definitive rational proofs, so it is concluded that they are not to be taken in the real sense..." I say: It is quite ironic to see them elevating their incoherent, contradictory slave minds to the level of definitive rational proofs, and having the audacity to consider revelation as mere speculative hearsay. The truth is that authentic revelation does not contradict sound reason. We have seen how the contradiction emerged in their minds due to their unsubstantiated reverence and blind following of certain concepts, which they named as rational proofs when, in reality, they were fallacious, corrupted, and irrational. What is built upon falsehood is false. Al-Taftazani added: "If it is said, 'If the true religion negates spatial direction, then why do the heavenly books and prophetic traditions indicate in numerous places that it is affirmed, without explicitly negating or clarifying it, as they have repeatedly indicated the existence of the Creator, His oneness, His knowledge, His power, the reality of the Hereafter, and the resurrection of bodies in many places, emphasizing these matters greatly? For this is also deserving of utmost emphasis and clarification since it is established in the natural disposition of rational beings, regardless of their differing religions and opinions, to turn upwards when praying and to raise their hands to the sky.' The answer is that since the negation of spatial direction is beyond the comprehension of the common people, to the extent that they almost certainly deny what is not in a direction, it was more appropriate in communication with them, closer to their uprightness, and more suitable for inviting them to the truth; to present

How then, when there is not a single letter in the Book of Allah, nor in the Sunnah of His Messenger, nor in the saying of the predecessors of the ummah [the Salaf], mentioning that Allah is not over the Throne or that He is not over the heaven, or that He is neither inside the world nor outside it, nor proximate to it nor separate from it, or that the servant should not seek elevation when calling upon Him over all other directions?! Rather, all that the Jahmites say in negation, claiming it to be the truth, is not supported by a single letter from the Book of Allah, nor the Sunnah of His Messenger, nor the saying of any of the predecessors of the ummah and its Imams. On the contrary, the Book, the Sunnah, and the sayings

---

what is apparent in 'Tasbih' similarity (to creation) and the belief that the Creator is in the most

honored direction, along with subtle indications of absolute transcendence." End, "Sharh Al-Maqasid v3, p. 38."

Thus, they believe that revelation, for the most part, is filled with anthropomorphism and what is apparently blasphemous, but with some fine and subtle hints which only the progeny of Jahm ibn Safwan are guided to discover. I assume there is not a more suitable answer to them for that other than restating their abhorrent claim. This was just an example of many, to not lengthen the reply.

of the predecessors and the Imams are filled with what indicates the opposite of their view[97], while they say: that its apparent meaning is disbelief[98], so we reinterpret or consign [Ta'weel or Tafweed]. Therefore, according to their statement, there is nothing in the Book, the Sunnah, and the sayings of the predecessors and Imams in this matter except what its apparent meaning is disbelief, and nothing of those sayings is considered faith [emān] in this matter. The negation they claim to be the truth that the believer or the elite of believers must believe in, according to them, was not spoken by any messenger, prophet, or any of the heirs of the prophets and messengers. What the prophets and their heirs spoke is not considered by them to be the truth, but rather it contradicts the truth in its apparent form.

[97] For example, on the issue of God's elevation upon His throne, there are numerous scholars reporting consensus on the matter. Imam Abu Umar al-Talamanki al-Maliki (340 - 429 H) said: "Ahl al-Sunnah are unanimously agreed that He, the Exalted, ascended upon the throne, in the real sense, not metaphorically." [Al-'ulow p:247]

[98] We just mentioned an example of this with Al-Taftazani. However, the method of Kalam entirely is constructed upon this heretical view that the apparent meanings of revelation are blasphemous. Thus, they feel the need to solve "the problem" by their twisted corruption of the texts.

In fact, their astute scholars know that it contradicts the truth both outwardly and inwardly[99].

But among them are those who claim that the prophets could not address people except in a way contrary to the esoteric truth, so they deceived and lied for the sake of public interest. To them, it is said: would they [the prophets] not have spoken the hidden truth to their intelligent, virtuous, elite [followers] if what they claim is true?[100]

---

[99] The theorist scholars of these heretical doctrines know that their views, in essence, both outwardly and inwardly contradict what the prophet preached. To them, revelation, compared to what they think is the truth, is nothing but phantasm. Therefore, they believe the message of the prophets was not to guide people to the truth but to provide what fixes their societies. They regard the Quran as merely sermons and rhetorical speeches suitable for simple-minded and common people to persuade and influence them. All of this is heresy, so that their nonsensical, irrational, contradictory euphemistic arguments—which they thought were a product of reason—could stand for them. Instead of making revelation the compass of their intellect, they were willing to sacrifice and disregard it entirely for the sake of hallucinations and Satan's whispers that, upon scrutiny, contradict even the intellect they tried to appeal to. This demonstrates that anyone who seeks a way distinct from that of revelation will only make a fool of himself.

[100] Meaning if we go by what they say, that the prophets approved of certain blasphemies because the people were too ignorant to

It is known that the special followers of the messengers also adhere to affirmation, and that no one among them spoke of negation unless falsely attributed to them. Such as what is said about Umar: That the Prophet, peace be upon him, and Abu Bakr were talking, and I was like a black [foreigner] man between them [i.e. someone who does not understand their Arabic speech.] However, this is fabricated by consensus of the scholars. Similarly, what is attributed to Ali and his family: that they had esoteric knowledge contrary to the apparent knowledge held by the majority of the ummah.

It has been established in the authentic collections and others from Ali may Allah be pleased with him that there was no secret with them from the Prophet, peace be upon him that was not known to the people, nor any written book except what was in the scroll, which mentioned: the blood money, the ransom of captives, and that no Muslim should be killed for a disbeliever.

---

reject them, we should at least find within the teachings of the prophet what these kalamists consider to be the truth communicated to his closest disciples, whom he trusted to have the intellectual capacity to understand these teachings. However, in reality, we find that his closest disciples and companions were among the greatest defenders of the teachings of the ummah, never deviating from them, let alone teaching anything that drastically contradicts them as the heretics claim.

Moreover, it is known that the one whom Allah has made a guide, delivering the message in a clear Arabic tongue, if he never speaks except what contradicts the inner, true reality, he is closer to error and deception than to guidance and clarification. But expanding on refuting them has its own place, which is not here. The point is that what has come from the Prophet, peace be upon him in this matter and others is all truth, each part of it corroborates the other, and it is consistent with the innate nature of creation, what was ingrained in them of pure intellects, and correct intentions. It does not contradict pure reason, proper intention, the upright innate nature, nor the authentic transmission established from the Messenger of Allah, peace be upon him[101]. The perception of its contradiction only

[101] The position of Ahl al-Sunnah on names and attributes of Allah is between two extremes, Shaikh Al-Islam said: "The understanding of Ahl al-Sunnah regarding the names, attributes, and verses of Allah is balanced between the extremes of the people of negation, who distort the names and verses of Allah and invalidate the realities of what Allah has described Himself with, to the extent that they liken Him to non-existence and lifelessness, and the people of anthropomorphism, who give Him similitudes and liken Him to His creations. Ahl al-Sunnah wal-Jamaa'a believe in what Allah has described Himself with, and what His Messenger has described Him

comes from someone who either believes in a false transmission, or understands from it something it does not indicate, or believes something he thinks is rational but is actually ignorance, or considers something as natural revelation, but it is actually delusion; if it were in opposition to an authentic transmission. Or he utilises pure reason or true natural revelation, to oppose what he assumed to be a transmission from the Prophet, peace be upon him, while [in reality] it would be a lie against him. Or what he assumed to be a clear indication of something which it does not indicate. For instance, what they mentioned of the statement of the Prophet, peace be upon him: "The Black Stone is the right hand of Allah on earth. Whoever touches it with his hand and kisses it, it is as if he has shaken hands with Allah and kissed His right hand." They thought that this and similar statements require reinterpretation, which is an error from their part—if this statement were authentic from the Prophet, peace be upon him—because this phrase clearly indicates that the stone is not one of the attributes of Allah, as he said: "It is the right hand of Allah on earth", restricting it to the earth, indicates that it is not His hand in the absolute sense, and thus, it is not the real hand [of Allah]. And his saying "Whoever

with, without distortion or negation, without anthropomorphism or resemblance." Majmoo' Al-Fatawa 3/373

touches it with his hand and kisses it, it is as if he has shaken hands with Allah and kissed His right hand" clearly illustrates that one who touches it with his hand and kisses it, is not shaking hands with Allah nor kissing His right hand, because the tenor (the thing being compared) is not the same as the vehicle (the thing being compared to). He used the phrase "as if," which is explicit [as a comparator] in [indicating] Simile. Thus, when the statement explicitly indicates that it [the black stone] is considered "as" the right hand, not that it is the right hand itself, then whoever believes its apparent meaning indicates that it is the real right hand, is asserting blatant falsehood[102].

All of this is under the consideration that the Throne is spherical in shape, whether it is the ninth celestial sphere or another. It has become clear that its surface is the ceiling of all creations and that it is above them from all sides. Nothing in the

[102] This is an important remark because, in most cases, what these people assume is the apparent meaning of the texts or their indication, or implication is not really the case. The problem lies somewhere in their assessment of the text, their reading, their understanding, or its authenticity. Sometimes, this is intentional as they already come with a bias towards a certain position, so they intentionally seek to find problems within the text to justify their corruption of it, and deviation from it. Shaykh Al-Islam just mentioned an example of that and analyzed it; there are many others.

heavens and the earth can be above it, and the one aiming towards what is above the Throne with this regard implies that he aims towards elevation. It is neither in accordance with natural disposition nor with the [divine] law, while the person has a complete intent, to aim for any other direction among his six directions. Rather, He [Almighty] also faces the seeker with his face while being above him, as the Prophet, peace be upon him made an example of it, which is that of the moon—and to Allah belongs the highest similitude—showing that if such case is possible for the moon, which is a sign among the signs of Allah, then the Creator is higher and greater.

However, if it is considered that the Throne is not spherical in shape, rather above the world [specifically] from the direction that is the face of the earth, and that it is above the spherical celestial bodies, just as the face of the earth set for the creatures is above half of the spherical earth, or other such measures where the Throne is above all else but not spherical, in every case, we do not direct ourselves towards Allah, except towards elevation, not towards other directions.

It has become evident that in every regard, it is not permissible to direct oneself to Allah except towards elevation, with Him being on His Throne distinct from His creation. Whether it is considered along with that; He encompasses the creations as He encompasses them when they are in His grasp,

or considered along with that; He is above them without encompassing and grasping them, in both cases, He is above them and distinct from them. It has become evident that both in this consideration of the Creator, and in this consideration of the Throne, there is no undesirable or contradictory proposition that is necessitated[103]. This removes every doubt, for [this] doubt only emerges from two false beliefs.

One of them is: to assume that if the Throne is spherical and Allah is above it, then Allah must be spherical, and then one believes that if he is spherical, it is valid to direct oneself towards what is spherical—like the ninth celestial sphere—from all

[103] That was the conclusion of the entire treatise. He answered the question meticulously in regards to both considerations, illustrating that there is no contradiction or undesirable belief resulting from that. In any case, one should direct themselves to God from the upward direction seeking elevation, as it is indicated by innate disposition and confirmed by revelation. And this does not contradict His encompassing the world and having complete hold of it, nor does it contradict that He is the Innermost, with nothing behind Him [or hidden from him], just as He is the Most High, with nothing above Him. One of these truths does not negate the other. His encompassing of His creation does not negate His separation from them or His elevation above them. Rather, He is above His creation, encompassing them, and separate from them. Thus, His encompassing includes elevation, separation, vastness, and greatness.

directions. Both these beliefs are errors and misguidance. For Allah, while being above the Throne and with the belief that the Throne is spherical, whether it is the ninth sphere or else, it is not permissible to think that He resembles the celestial spheres in their shapes, just as it is not permissible to think that He resembles them in their measures, or in their attributes. Exalted is He above what the wrongdoers say greatly. Rather, it has become clear that He is far greater and more magnificent than for the creations to be [in relation] to Him, similar to how the interior of a sphere is [in relation] to the sphere. Rather, they are to Him smaller than a chickpea or a peppercorn or the like in the hand of one of us. If a chickpea or a peppercorn—or even a dirham or a dinar, or a ball that children play with, and so forth—is in the hand of a human, or under him, or the like, could any rational person, when perceiving the human's elevation and encompassing of such objects, consider the human to be like a sphere? And to Allah belongs the highest Similitude. He is far greater above being thought of in such a way. Rather, it is assumed only by those who: "They have not appraised Allah with true appraisal, while the earth entirely will be within His grip on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens will be folded

in His right hand. Exalted is He and high above what they associate with Him."[104]

Similarly, their second belief: that what is spherical can be directed towards from the six directions, is false by consensus of rational people; those who know astronomy, and those who know that a decisive intention necessitates doing what is intended, with what is possible.

[104] Az-Zumar: 67

This is a valid point, for if even creatures holding objects and being elevated above them does not necessitate that they share the objects' shape, why would it be necessitated in the case of the Creator, who has no likeness? Anyone who assumes or entertains the possibility that God being elevated above the universe and encompassing it means He shares the shape of the universe is a heretic with a twisted mind. Such a person compares God to His creation and imposes limitations upon Him that are not even applicable to the creation. This implies an understanding of the Lord Almighty that is less accurate than their understanding of the creation, which is all due to their disrespect for the Creator, for they have not appraised Him with true appraisal. If they had, they would have known that there is nothing like unto Him, that He is greater than all, above all, and that the entire creation is insignificant to Him. He does with it as He pleases due to His grandeur and their weakness and insignificance.

It has become evident that each of the two premises is erroneous from both rational and legal [shar'i] perspectives, and that it is not permissible for the hearts to be directed to him except towards elevation, not towards any other direction, irrespective of any supposed consideration; whether the Throne is the ninth sphere or other than that, whether it encompasses the sphere and is spherical in shape, or above it without being spherical, whether the Creator Exalted is he encompasses the creations as He encompasses them in His grasp, or is above them from the direction of elevation towards our heads, without the other direction—upon any supposed consideration—each of the question's two premises is fallacious, and [instead] when we call upon Allah, we only call Him seeking elevation and nothing else, just as we were innately created to do. And with this, the answer to the question becomes evident from multiple perspectives. And Allah knows best[i]

[i] Since we are at the end of the treatise, we may address a misconception that may arise in relation to the topic at hand, specifically regarding God's encompassing of the creation. One might argue, "Does that not make creation part of His essence?" We have already stated that encompassing does not negate separation. He encompasses them while remaining distinct from them. His essence

is His, and their essence is theirs. His essence is distinct and separate from their essence, and their essence is distinct and separate from His essence. Even if He holds them in His grip or encompasses them in any way, it should be evident that this does not entail that they become part of His essence. This should be clear by virtue of His ability to hold His creation without it becoming part of His essence. Nonetheless, we shall further elaborate on this point: Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah said in "Majmu' al-Fatawa" (6/567): "Allah, the Exalted, encompasses all creatures in a manner befitting His Majesty; for the seven heavens and the earth are smaller in His hand than a mustard seed in the hand of one of us." He also said in "Sharh Hadith al-Nuzul" (p. 190-191): "It is also confirmed in the authentic hadith reported by Muslim and others from the Prophet, peace be upon him that he used to say: 'O Allah, You are the First, there is nothing before You, and You are the Last, there is nothing after You, and You are the Most High, there is nothing above You, and You are the Innermost, there is nothing beyond You.' This is a clear text indicating that there is nothing above Allah, and His being the Most High is an inherent attribute of Him just as His being the First and the Last. Similarly, His being the Innermost, Thus, he was always the Most high, with nothing above him, and the innermost with nothing beyond Him [or hidden from him].

Moreover, the hadith of Abu Dharr, Abu Huraira, and Qatada mentioned in the interpretation of these four names, which includes the mention of lowering, is something we have discussed in the issue of encompassing. It clarifies that Allah remains always elevated

above His creation while being apparent and innermost, and even when He descends to the lowest heaven." Furthermore, Allah says: 'They have not appraised Allah with true appraisal, while the earth entirely will be within His grip on the Day of Resurrection, and the heavens will be folded in His right hand. Exalted is He and high above what they associate with Him' (Az-Zumar: 67). Whoever possesses such greatness cannot be confined by any of His creations. The Prophet, peace be upon him, explained this verse with authentic hadiths that the scholars of hadith have unanimously agreed upon and accepted as true and authentic."

Ibn Taymiyyah also said regarding the meaning of 'al-Batin' in "Majmu' al-Fatawa" (5/244): "'You are the Innermost, and there is nothing beyond You,' it includes the meaning of attribution; for there must be appearance and hiddenness for the one who appears and hides. Even though they include meanings of manifestation and concealment, as well as another meaning like elevation in appearance; He, the Exalted, is not described with belowness, but appears from the high direction upon us, he manifests through knowledge of hearts and intentions towards Him, and appears to the eyes when He is seen on the Day of Judgment. He is apparent, high above, with nothing above Him, and from another perspective he is innermost, not approached or witnessed from it, despite nothing being closer than him, for he is behind [all] creation encompassing, nothing is beyond him [hidden from him] exalted is he."

He also said about comencompassing in "Bayan Talbis al-Jahmiyyah fi Ta'sis Bid'ihim al-Kalamiyyah" (4/37): "...He informed

that He is the Most High with nothing above Him, and He is the Innermost with nothing beyond Him. This indicates that there is nothing above Him in His manifestation and elevation over things, and nothing beyond Him; indicating that there is no greater hiddenness than Him; as He is hidden from the other side of His servants. He combined between an expression of hiddenness and that of beyondness, - and they are not the same- when he said: “you are Al-batin with nothing beyond you” indicating that his hiddenness necessitated that nothing is beyond him, thus, nothing is hidden from him considering his hiddenness, which is understood considering the unapparent direction. That is why he did not say: "You are the lower one," nor is the name "Al-Batin" (the innermost) used in the phrase: "You are the Hidden, and there is nothing beyond You," without being coupled with the name "Al-dhahir" (the Manifest), which indicates His manifestation and elevation. Thus, nothing is above Him, as the combination of these two names signifies complete encompassing and vastness, and that he is the Manifest, so nothing is above Him, and He is the Hidden, so nothing is beyond Him. It is not said: "You are the lower one"—nor has God ever been described as "lower," neither really nor metaphorically. Instead, it is stated: "There is nothing beyond You," informing that there is nothing beyond him [from] there; as mentioned in the narration cited by Malik in Al-Muwatta, which states: "Allah is sufficient for us, and Allah hears the call of the one who invokes Him. There is no target beyond [behind] Allah." Thus, included in the meaning of his name al-batin: there is nothing that could be reached

behind Him, nor is there anything beyond Him, to clarify that He is not excluded in any way from both perspectives. This is because the direction beyond him negated with this meaning, is a relative conceptual attribution, and in reality, He is also elevated from that direction, and every existing thing is beneath Him."

Imam Ibn al-Qayyim also elucidates the meaning indicated by Shaykh al-Islam Ibn Taymiyyah in his book "Tariq al-Hijratayn wa Bab al-Sa'adatayn" (p. 21) while explaining the previous hadith of Abu Hurayrah: "As for worshipping Allah by His name 'al-Batin,' it is a matter whose true nature defies the scope of expression, and the tongue falters in describing it, and gestures fall short of indicating it, and expressions fail to encompass it. It requires knowledge free from the impurities of negation (ta'til), purified from the dross of anthropomorphism (tashbih), sanctified from the filth of incarnation (hulul) and union (ittihad), and an expression that conveys the meaning clearly and precisely, with a correct taste unmarred by the deviations of those who go astray. Whoever is granted this, understands the meaning of His name 'al-Batin,' and achieves the proper worship through it. Glory be to Allah! How many have slipped in this matter, how many minds have gone astray in it, and how many heretics have spoken with the tongue of the righteous! To the extent the brethren of the Christians have been confused with the sincere monotheists, due to the inaccessibility of this understanding and the difficulty of distinguishing truth from falsehood in this context, and the confusion between what is conceptualized in the mind and what exists externally. Except for the one whom Allah

grants insight into the truth, and a light to distinguish between guidance and misguidance, and a criterion to differentiate between truth and falsehood, along with a comprehensive understanding of the causes of error, the divergence of paths, and the sources of mistakes. Such a person has insight into both truth and falsehood, and that is the grace of Allah, which He bestows upon whom He wills, and Allah is the possessor of great bounty.

The door to this knowledge and worship is knowing the encompassing reality of the Lord, blessed and exalted, over the world and His greatness, and that all the worlds are within His grasp, and that the seven heavens and the seven earths are in His hand like a mustard seed in the hand of a servant, Exalted be He, says: 'And [remember, O Muhammad], when We told you, "Indeed, your Lord has encompassed the people."' [Al-Isra: 60], and He says: 'But Allah is encompassing them from behind' (Al-Buruj: 20). Thus, He combines these two names that indicate these two meanings: the name of elevation, which indicates that He is the Most High, and that there is nothing above Him, and the name of greatness, which indicates encompassing, and that there is nothing beyond Him, as He says: 'And He is the Most High, the most Great' (Ash-Shura: 4), and He says: 'And He is the Most High, the Most Grand' (Saba: 23), and He says: 'To Allah belongs the east and the west. So wherever you turn, there is the Face of Allah. Indeed, Allah is all-Encompassing and Knowing' (Al-Baqara: 115)."

He, blessed and exalted, just as He is elevated above His creation by His essence with nothing above Him, He is also the innermost by His essence with nothing beyond Him. He manifests over everything and is above it, and He is the innermost, being closer to everything than itself, and He encompasses it; nothing encompasses itself, and everything is in His grip, but nothing is in its own grip...."

He then said: "His hiddenness means His encompassing of everything, being closer to it than itself. This closeness is different from the closeness of a lover to his beloved. This is of one kind, and that is of another. The foundation of these four names is encompassing, and they indicate two types of encompassing: temporal and spatial. His being the First and the Last encompasses the before and after. Every preceding thing ends with His firstness, and every last thing ends with His lastness. Thus, His being the First and the Last encompasses the beginnings and the ends. His being the Most High and the Innermost encompasses every apparent and hidden thing. There is nothing apparent except that Allah is above it, and there is nothing hidden except that Allah is beyond it. There is no first except that Allah is before it, and there is no last except that Allah is after it. The first is His pre-existence, the last is His eternal duration, the Most High is His elevation and greatness, and the Innermost is His closeness and nearness. He preceded everything with His firstness, and He remains after everything with His lastness. He is above everything with His appearance, and He is closer to

everything with His hiddenness. No heaven can cover another heaven from Him, and no earth can cover another earth from Him. No apparent thing can conceal a hidden thing from Him, for the hidden is apparent to Him, the unseen is visible to Him, the far is near to Him, and the secret is open to Him. These four names encompass the pillars of monotheism. He is the First in His Lastness, the Last in His Firstness, the Most High in His Hiddenness, and the Innermost in His Appearance. He has always been the First, the Last, the Most High, and the Innermost." End Quote.

Therefore, with these heart touching words we conclude and say: God's encompassing of creation does not contradict His separation from it and elevation above it, nor does it imply that creation is within His essence. This would go against the meaning of separation, as two things that are separate from each other are distinct. Just as one of us can hold a mustard seed in our hand and completely encompass it without it becoming inside of our essence, or part of it, it is even more befitting for God, to whom belongs the highest similitude, to encompass all of creation without it being within His essence. The Creator and the creation are separate and distinct. And perhaps the most important thing to remember when speaking about the Lord Almighty is that we have been given very little knowledge, and what we do not know of His magnificence and greatness far surpasses what we do know. Yet, the knowledge we possess revives souls, amazes minds, softens hearts, entangles tongues, and increases faith. What He has said about Himself and what His prophets have informed us cannot be anything but the

truth. Only a lost soul would dare to oppose the words of such a magnificent entity with the whims of their intellect, for they have neither known Him correctly nor been given authority by Him to speak on His behalf. Exalted is He above what they say, exalted is He above what they deny. His words bring about reverence, and those who have tasted the sweetness of faith can only ponder upon them, accept them, and appreciate them. With this explanation, the question is answered, the matter is clarified, and praise be to Allah, through whom all good actions are made possible.